

**PETER B. MERIALDO:  
MEMOIRS OF A SON OF ITALIAN IMMIGRANTS,  
RECORDER AND AUDITOR OF EUREKA COUNTY,  
NEVADA STATE CONTROLLER,  
AND REPUBLICAN PARTY WORKER**

Interviewee: Peter B. Merialdo

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Description

Peter B. Merialdo was born in Eureka, Nevada, in 1899. The son of an immigrant Italian who established his home in Eureka in the 1870s, Mr. Merialdo grew up in that small central Nevada mining town. Once bustling with activity, Eureka declined as the mines ceased being productive; by the time he graduated from high school, he was the valedictorian and salutatorian, and delivered the farewell address and the welcome to the new class—because he was the only person to graduate that year.

Mr. Merialdo soon began a long political career by winning election as recorder and auditor of Eureka County. He was continuously reelected to that position from the early 1920s until 1950, when he was elected state controller. Reelected in 1954, he was defeated when he ran a third time in 1958.

A Republican who had many Democratic friends and attracted votes from members of that party, Mr. Merialdo has known many of the important political leaders of Nevada during the last few decades, including George Wingfield, Senator Patrick McCarran, and Governor Paul Laxalt. Although retired from public office for many years, in 1964 and 1966 he campaigned vigorously for Laxalt in the small counties.

This oral history provides a record of the life of a colorful and prominent Nevada politician. Through several decades of public life and activity in real estate and insurance, Peter Merialdo helped many people and won many friends.



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An Oral History Conducted by Mary Ellen Glass

University of Nevada Oral History Program

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## PREFACE TO THE DIGITAL EDITION

Established in 1964, the University of Nevada Oral History Program (UNOHP) explores the remembered past through rigorous oral history interviewing, creating a record for present and future researchers. The program's collection of primary source oral histories is an important body of information about significant events, people, places, and activities in twentieth and twenty-first century Nevada and the West.

The UNOHP wishes to make the information in its oral histories accessible to a broad range of patrons. To achieve this goal, its transcripts must speak with an intelligible voice. However, no type font contains symbols for physical gestures and vocal modulations which are integral parts of verbal communication. When human speech is represented in print, stripped of these signals, the result can be a morass of seemingly tangled syntax and incomplete sentences—totally verbatim transcripts sometimes verge on incoherence. Therefore, this transcript has been lightly edited.

While taking great pains not to alter meaning in any way, the editor may have removed false starts, redundancies, and the “uhs,” “ahs,” and other noises with which speech is often liberally sprinkled; compressed some passages which, in unaltered form, misrepresent the chronicler's meaning; and relocated some material to place information in its intended context. Laughter is represented with [laughter] at the end of a sentence in which it occurs, and ellipses are used to indicate that a statement has been interrupted or is incomplete...or that there is a pause for dramatic effect.

As with all of our oral histories, while we can vouch for the authenticity of the interviews in the UNOHP collection, we advise readers to keep in mind that these are remembered pasts, and we do not claim that the recollections are entirely free of error. We can state, however, that the transcripts accurately reflect the oral history recordings on which they were based. Accordingly, each transcript should be approached with the

same prudence that the intelligent reader exercises when consulting government records, newspaper accounts, diaries, and other sources of historical information. All statements made here constitute the remembrance or opinions of the individuals who were interviewed, and not the opinions of the UNOHP.

In order to standardize the design of all UNOHP transcripts for the online database, most have been reformatted, a process that was completed in 2012. This document may therefore differ in appearance and pagination from earlier printed versions. Rather than compile entirely new indexes for each volume, the UNOHP has made each transcript fully searchable electronically. If a previous version of this volume existed, its original index has been appended to this document for reference only. A link to the entire catalog can be found online at <http://oralhistory.unr.edu/>.

For more information on the UNOHP or any of its publications, please contact the University of Nevada Oral History Program at Mail Stop 0324, University of Nevada, Reno, NV, 89557-0324 or by calling 775/784-6932.

Alicia Barber  
Director, UNOHP  
July 2012

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## INTRODUCTION

Peter B. Merialdo is a native of Nevada, born in Eureka in 1899. His political career began almost before he was old enough to vote, and has continued to the present time. Professor Elmer Rusco's introduction summarizes and evaluates Mr. Merialdo's contributions to the politics and society of Eureka and Nevada.

When invited to participate in the Oral History Project of the Center for Western North American Studies, Mr. Merialdo accepted graciously. Four recording sessions followed, from November, 1966, to January, 1967, all conducted in his real estate and insurance office in Carson City, Nevada. Mr. Merialdo was a cooperative memoirist, recounting his experiences with enthusiasm and good humor.

The Oral History Project of the Center for Western North American Studies attempts to preserve the past and the present for future research .by tape recording the reminiscences of persons who have been important to the development of Nevada and the West. Scripts resulting from the

interviews are deposited in the Nevada and the West Collection of the University of Nevada Library on the Reno campus, and in the Special Collections Department of the Nevada Southern University Library. Permission to cite or quote from Peter Merialdo's script may be obtained through the Center for Western North American Studies. Mr. Merialdo's permission to use the script is required of all researchers during his lifetime.

Mary Ellen Glass  
University of Nevada  
1968



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## SPECIAL INTRODUCTION

“My philosophy of life is . . . to assist people if I can.” This is how Peter Merialdo describes his approach to life. Through several decades of public life and activity in real estate and insurance, Mr. Merialdo has helped many people and won many friends.

The son of an immigrant Italian who established his home in Eureka in the 1870’s, Mr. Merialdo grew up in that small central Nevada mining town. Once bustling with activity, Eureka declined as the mines ceased being productive; by the time he graduated from high school, he was the valedictorian and salutatorian and delivered the farewell address and the welcome to the new class—because he was the only person to graduate that year.

Mr. Merialdo soon began a long political career by winning election as Recorder and Auditor of Eureka County. He was continuously reelected to that position from the early 1920’s until 1950, when he was elected State Controller. Reelected in 1954, he was defeated when he ran a third time, in 1958.

A Republican who had many Democratic friends and attracted votes from members of that party, Mr. Merialdo has known many of the important political leaders of Nevada during the last few decades, including George Wingfield, Senator Patrick McCarran, and Governor Paul Laxalt. Although retired from public office for many years, in 1964 and 1966 he campaigned vigorously for Laxalt in the small counties.

This oral history provides a record of the life of a colorful and prominent Nevada politician, and in doing so provides insight into various aspects of the Nevada political scene.

Elmer R. Rusco  
Department of Political Science  
University of Nevada  
1968



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## EARLY DAYS IN EUREKA

My father's name was Bernardo Merialdo. He was born in 1857 in Genoa, Italy. He immigrated to this country, came into Eureka, Nevada, in March of 1878. Mother's name was Mary. She came in 1881, in the spring of the year. I recall my dad saying how it took something like thirty-two or thirty-three days on the water to get across the Atlantic. Then when he got to New York, they practically put a tag on you there with your destination marked on it, for instance, Palisade, Nevada. When you arrived at Palisade, you went from Palisade on the Eureka and Palisade Railroad to Eureka.

He arrived in Eureka at the invitation, of course, of his brother, an older brother who was in Eureka in 1872. He had told my father that if he was a good boy and would take care of his mother (their father had died), that he would then send him passage to come over to America. He did, in 1878.

At that time, before coming to America, he was working in a tannery for \$7.50 a month. When his brother told him that he would get him a job for \$2.00 a day burning

charcoal, my father thought that was just wonderful. So he went out into the hills and burnt charcoal for a few years.

In the meantime, in 1881, my mother arrived. She was born in Naples, Italy, in 1864. And she married a fellow by the name of Rebaleati. Dad had quit the charcoal burning and went to work in the mines there. In 1889, my mother's first husband died, and then my father Bernardo, married my mother. There was five children born, three boys and two girls.

My father wasn't involved in the Fish Creek war; however, a great many of his friends were involved in there. He remembered quite vividly, as he was telling me, that it was strictly not a war, as they always say it was. It was a misunderstanding. And having read over the records that are in the county clerk's office in Eureka, Nevada, and having read over the grand jury reports, it appeared like one of the charcoal burners reached for a stick that he was whittling. The deputies that had gone out there to settle this strike, thought he had reached for a gun, and then they opened fire

on him. There was no war, I don't think. As far as my dad had told me, the charcoal burners had no weapons of any kind. That was his side of the story, and he was quite put out by the fact that they were slaughtered, in other words, as he said.

He worked up in the Fourth of July mine, where he went to work at dark and came home at dark in the wintertime, for \$2.00 a day for Morris H. Joseph, who owned the Fourth of July mine. It was one of the very, very steep mines in Prospect Mountain. Then later on, because he was so big, tall, strong—he weighed about 200 pounds—I guess he was such a worker they raised him to \$2.25 a day.

Then later on, after he quit the mines and married my mother, he went into business in Eureka, in the early nineties. He remained in business there, and had a bar and a boarding house. Somewhere in my collections I still have one of the old, what we called “bingos,” good for one drink at twelve and a half cents.

Mother was quite put out. She'd feed these people for twenty-five cents a meal. Many times they'd come in there, they wouldn't have it, and she'd say, “Well, if you don't have your money, you're just going to have to go without your meals. You're going to have to go out and earn it.” They'd go out the back door and come in the front door and my dad would give them twenty-five cents to go back in and eat. That went on and on until 1918, and then it went dry. The Volstead Act went into effect. My dad wanted no part of it so he just closed the business. Of course, Mother was quite tired. There was more on the books than they really made during all of these years of hard work.

My mother was a very, very good cook. In the years that she was cooking, Eureka was the, I would say, the main stopping place; largest city between Salt Lake City and Virginia City. Many of the very fine cooks traveled there, and they would be on a big

job. Some of them were poor cooks, of course. She'd hire them for a day or so and she'd let them go. But the good cooks, she'd try to keep. And from these various cooks, she'd learn different things, besides being a very good cook to begin with. So it developed that she was a very, very fine cook. We lived right on Main Street in Eureka, Nevada. She's passed down the recipes to my wife and my sisters over these years. Of course, we think they're very good cooks.

A lot of people used to ask us how we got along in a small town, what did we do, what could we do to pass the time, and so forth. We used to have a lot of fun. When we were growing up we had, starting about the first of November (it seems like a little different now; now you don't get that snow), clear on to the first of April we did nothing but sleigh-ride in the wintertime. Of course, we went to school, but all our spare time we'd put in sleigh-riding.

Eureka was always noted for having a band. We had a band in Eureka, which most of the small towns did. I remember in 1913, when Elko had a big rodeo. They didn't have a band in Elko, and they had to hire what they called the Lobster Club band from Eureka. I was just about thirteen, fourteen years old, and I went along with them; I didn't want to miss anything.

We had a lot of dances, a lot of celebrations, Fourth of July and Labor Day, and many, many big, what we call the big dances for the New Year's Eve and the Labor Day dance and the Fourth of July. And we always had a celebration and a baseball game and drilling contests and so forth. Most mining camps, I imagine, did this.

The various ethnic groups had their celebrations. My father was president of the Italian Benevolent Society. On October the twelfth, they always had the big dance then, but it seemed that, I can't really explain it to



you, it was really a jinx, because on two or three occasions there was someone killed on October the twelfth. It wasn't really pertaining to the dance. Finally, one of the years they gave it up. The Italian Benevolent Society then just dwindled down. They had operated for several years.

They took care of their own. They were more or less a benevolent society, that if anyone, the Italians or any member that belonged to the benevolent society, was hurt in the mine or their people were sick, they were cared for. I remember myself going to a couple of funerals that my dad helped conduct there. It was strictly a benevolent society. They weren't like the Sons of Italy. I can remember the letters on the banner, SIMS.

Somewhere in my memoirs, I should tell you of deaths and burials in Eureka, say as, I remember from 1906 to 1951. When I was a young boy, whenever a person died in Eureka, the undertaker immediately placed a cloth wreath on the front door of the deceased's home, showing that there was a death in that particular house. The color of the wreath was black if an elderly person, and gray for a younger person. As there was no such a thing as embalming, friends and neighbors sat up at night and placed cold cloths on the face of the deceased, and the family did the same in the daytime. At the funeral, the hearse was horse-drawn, followed by the mourning carriage, with the nearest relatives, and then a surrey next with other relatives. The hearse used the same colors on the plumes—black for the elderly and gray for the younger people. I remember distinctly how we would gather on Atlas hill and watch the funeral procession. No one would count the wagons, as that was bad luck, and could cause a death in your family.

I remember about two occasions when I attended a Chinese funeral. I recall so well

when a Chinese merchant's wife died, and they placed twenty dollar gold pieces on her eyes to keep them shut. No doubt, they removed the gold pieces before she was buried. The funeral procession started on Bateman street from the Chinese Joss House, and immediately following the hearse were two men sitting on the rear of a buckboard, drawn by two horses. As the procession moved along, these two Chinamen would throw out square colored papers, about three inches square. Each square of paper was perforated with hundreds of small holes, and the papers were tossed out from the time the funeral procession left the Joss House, until it arrived at the cemetery. It seemed to me that most of the papers were colored red and yellow. From an old Chinaman that used to work for my mother, I learned that it was the belief of the Chinese that in order for the devil to get to the soul of the departed, he had to go through every hole in every paper. The more influential you were the more papers were distributed from the back end of the wagon. After the funeral, the friends and relatives placed heaps of food on the grave. I have seen small roasted pigs, chop suey, etc., on the grave. Immediately after the relatives left the grave, the Indians who had been watching from a nearby hill would dash over and have a real feed.

During these years there were several Chinese in Eureka, but I only remember one Negro. There were a lot of Indians. The English or "Cousin Jacks" were predominant at Ruby Hill; by the old Diamond was ninety-seven percent Italian.

Eureka went down in about 1905, or '06. My brother and three or four other boys rode—that was when Goldfield was discovered—to Tonopah and Goldfield on a bicycle following the old freight train to get a job. But it was too rough for them. Some of the boys stayed there. One young fellow there

by the name of Bill Swick stayed and drove the water wagon, I've heard my brother often say, but it was too rough. My brother came home. There was no place to sleep.

My brother-in-law, Bob Kelley, that's Pete Kelley's dad, and his dad and Bob built the arena for the Gans-Nelson fight. And Bob said it was nothing to change shifts with somebody. When this fellow would go to work at three o'clock in the afternoon and come home at eleven, and when he came home, he'd get out of bed. They worked it so that they'd take turns using the bed, it was just continually. They just had time to change once in a while; probably not very often either.

Bob also told me about that time that they built the Gans-Nelson arena. He said that his dad was quite worried. He never thought there'd be such a crowd. So at twelve o'clock at night, immediately before the fight, he gathered all of his carpenters, and they went down there and they put stulls under all of the grandstand for fear that, they were just worried a little bit that that wasn't braced and there was going to be too much of a crowd. So they put these stulls under it to make sure that it wouldn't collapse. And fifteen minutes after the fight was over (it went, I think, forty-two rounds), he said the carpenters were down there tearing it all down and piling up the lumber, because lumber was a scarce item in those days and they'd steal it as fast as they could, that is, if you weren't watching. So they piled it all up and got it out of there right away fast.

We had, of course, in Eureka the Episcopal church, the Catholic church, the Methodist church, and the Presbyterian church. I imagine the Episcopal church and the Catholic church were the two oldest churches there. I have seen pictures of the Episcopal before the ditch was made through town and

I think that was made in '77, I believe—so the church was there before that. I remember seeing the picture with no ditch there.

Then the Catholic church. That was built about 1879, I guess. In office, I abstracted records of that church and the Catholic cemetery. But the Catholic cemetery was there in the sixties, '65 or '66 right after Eureka was discovered in 1864.

Charles E. Van Loan, when he wrote up the Ghost Cities of the West, called Eureka "the camp of nine graveyards." He mentioned (whether it was this article or another one that I had read) how they started the first cemetery in the sixties. A teamster and a miner got together and says, "Well, we've got everything now in Eureka. We have the dance halls, and we have the bars. We just as well start a cemetery." So they got in a fight. One shot the other one and says, "Now we'll have a cemetery." That's of course, one of the old stories that they tell.

Mining in Eureka as I recall in my lifetime, was the Ruby Hill mines—the "big mines" they were always referred to—and they were producing every day until about 1910. Then we had, I recall quite well, when the railroad washed out in 1910. When the railroad went out, then the mines closed down. Unfortunately, the banks closed all at the same time, so Eureka was really hard-hit in 1910. There were floods and the railroad washing out and the mines closing down and the banks closing.

However, a few years later, they rebuilt the railroad—I don't remember the exact date. Then there were those other mines. The Diamond mine had been running all of these years, but wasn't the producer that Ruby Hill was. The Windfall was discovered; that was running in 1911, 1912, '13—along in there.

We had quite a bit of mining activity then for a few years. Then along about during the

war it slowed down. Then it picked up again in the early twenties.

I started school in September of 1905. (By the way, there's a young lady living on the same street— I say young— in Carson City that started to school with me in 1905. She and her sister were twins. Their grandmother was Mrs. Snyder who ran the drugstore; Mrs. H. M. Snyder. We used to think a lot of those girls because every morning they'd go down and say good-bye to their grandmother, and she'd give them a handful of this fruit drop candy.) But all during school we never did have over eight—ten was a large class. We went to school on the top of Atlas Hill. That was directly behind the courthouse, and we had a janitor that wouldn't let us in the school until eight o'clock. If we got there a little before eight o'clock, we stood outside and waited until he opened the door.

By the way, speaking of that, that janitor was there for years and years. On the thirtieth of May, 1918, or '19, the fire bell rang. In those days Eureka had fire bells, no alarm system. So we had just returned from the parade from the cemetery; every year they marched to the cemeteries, they may still do. So the fire alarm sounded, and we all ran up to the Rescue Hose Company where our cart was. Clay Sims, who was the janitor of the school, came up a little late and as we turned the corner, he dashed in in front of my older brother to get ahold of the rope to pull this cart and he stumbled and my brother stumbled. Fortunately, for my brother, he stumbled right in the center of the two wheels, between the two wheels, and the hose ran over him and scraped him, but Clay Sims the janitor was run over by this cart that we were pulling. It ran right over his shoulders and his chest and crushed him. He was killed. He just lived a few hours after that accident.

But Deac, as we called him, Deacon Sims was the janitor all the years that I had gone to

grammar school there as I remember. I never did go to another school in Eureka outside of that one that was up on the hill.

The old school was a lot of fun in the wintertime for most of the children. It was right on top of the hill, and everybody, right after the first of November, brought their sleds. It was quite a job hauling them up the hill, but boy! We sure scooted home fast at noon because there was just a slide. You had to be a pretty good driver to get past some of those curves and avoid the—no automobiles, we didn't have that to worry about—old teams that would go by particularly in crossing Main Street. I remember two boys going right between an ore team, right between the wheels, went in and out and never touched a thing. Of course, the old ore teams, you know how fast they would go, maybe about two or three miles an hour.

But I also recall stealing a sled, a Flexible Flyer that we always wanted to ride on, and we had never had one. Bill Zadow and Creighton Whitmore always had, their parents had bought them one of the new big Flexible Flyers—they were four passengers. Another young fellow and I, about seven years old or eight, decided we were going to take a ride on it. Bill had it parked by his mother's hotel. She ran the Zadow Hotel at that time. I think we took one ride and did well, and on the second ride, we came down and we hit something. We ended up right under a horse, the delivery wagon of John Williams, who was driving and selling milk around town. We drove right under his horse's belly. I crawled out as fast as I could and this other boy grabbed this horse by the heel and says, "Whoa, whoa, whoa." Well fortunately, the horse was gentle and never paid any attention. We could have gotten our heads kicked off. But that's the last time we ever stole a sled. A Flexible Flyer was a little bit too much for kids our age.

In those days we had to go through the “receiving grade”— we had to spend one year—which probably you would call a kindergarten. However, I was six years old in October and I couldn’t go to school until I was six. So I went into the “receiving grade” and then the first and second grade with one teacher, Helen Whitmore. And the third, fourth, and fifth my teacher was Kate Huber Cicala, and she was one of the finest teachers of fractions. Even today, I can remember those fractions just as plain as when she taught me. If you didn’t get them, you heard about it, and you stayed after school. Everything was fine if you stayed after school in the winter, although you couldn’t sleigh ride with the people. And you didn’t like the idea particularly in the spring of the year, when everyone was playing ball and you wanted to get out. Kate Cicala went on to teach in Elko, and she was rated, in arithmetic, as one of the finest teachers in the state.

Then in my sixth, seventh, and eighth grade, we had a lady by the name of Mrs. Alma Jenkins and Christye MacGillivray— she’s in Reno at the present time. So we all graduated from the eighth grade, and I think there was seven of us that went into high school. Then each year one dropped out, and the junior year the mother of the chief of police in Sparks, Bob Galli’s mother dropped out. Her maiden name was Rose Modarelli. I remember I was quite put out because she told me one day walking down the hill that she was going to get married, and I told her that wasn’t fair at all. Of course, I did hope that in the senior year someone would show up, but no one showed up and I graduated; I was the president of the student body, because the constitution and bylaws said it had to be a senior, and I was on every committee, and so forth. So it was a busy senior year.

In 1918, I graduated as the only graduate in the high school. And I recall talking to Mr. Charles Priest, who passed away recently who was my principal, and that I tried to talk him out of it. I said, me being the only graduate, “Can’t we just forget this graduation and just give me my diploma if I’ve earned it?” And I recall (of course, Mr. Priest was from Tennessee and had quite a southern accent), he says, “Petah, it’s been the custom heah for the last fifty years or more that we have our exercises in the theatah, and that’s where it’ll be.” And that’s where it was, because I wanted to graduate. I was the valedictorian, the salutatorian, and I gave the welcome to the new class and the farewell to the high school. Of course, my dad and mother were real proud and so were my sisters and brothers. So we often joke about it. I joke my children or grandchildren now that I was the valedictorian and so on.

Eureka was wiped out twice by fires. That is the reason that you see in Eureka all the brick buildings on the main street with all the iron doors. Most of them, of course, now they’ve probably moved, but the courthouse still has the iron doors. Many people say it was for floods, but it wasn’t. These iron doors were on account of fire. Some of the old-timers used to joke, say they’d set the place on fire and then close the iron doors so nobody could see it from the outside.

In Austin they used the wooden doors. They had some iron doors for flood purposes, but in Eureka I think they were all there just for to safeguard from fire. There was two fires, three floods.

I remember one flood in 1926, on the fourth of August. It took two or three lives. There was a Mrs. Catherine Affranchino and a Bill Barney, both were killed. Mrs. Affranchino lived up the Diamond and she saw this water coming and so she ran down

the canyon. She knew her husband was working down in one of the mines, and she thought she'd go down there and warn him, but the flood caught up to her before she got there. He was high enough up on the hill so that the water didn't go into the shaft. This fellow Barney tried to cross the creek above town to warn some of the girls in the red light district and he was caught in the flood. I think they found his body a couple or three miles away.

In that same flood, on the fourth of August, 1926, I was living on Main Street. The water came up to my front gate and my back gate. My brother lived above me, and had a wooden fence separating his property from mine, and that seemed to catch all the water. The weeds and so forth got in the cracks and the fence just swayed. So I dashed out and broke the front part of his fence so the water could go down. Then I dashed back and broke the back part of the fence so that the water could come out the back. Then the second spurt came just a little bit later and that came up almost to the porch, right up just about to the front porch. However, it never got into the house, but it did get into a lot of the homes further down the street and into the garages and into barbershops and stores. There wasn't too much of a loss, but I would say probably several thousand dollars. Mostly it was the lives.

In the first flood in Eureka, I believe way back in the seventies, there were seventeen lives lost. But after the first flood, it made that big ditch, as they all call it, in the back, and that relieved a lot of the water coming down the canyon. But it was always the same. You always watched the clouds in the summertime. After a hot spell, you get a lot of thunder and lightning. As the clouds broke on this side, as we called it, which would be the north of Prospect Mountain, then look out,

we might get a flood. If it broke on the other side, we didn't care.

Ed Skillman told me a lot about his early life where he slipped on a boat when he was a boy and injured himself and became a cripple all of his life. When he started out in his early life, before he went into the newspaper business with his dad, he started out with a fellow by the name of Willis. (That's why his younger son was named Willis.) They went all along the river, the Mississippi River, on a gambling boat. They were faro dealers.

He has told me, so many times about this partner of his. They were dealing and finally they left the river and went into Colorado, and they just had too tough luck and they went broke. They went broke in the faro game. So Ed said that (I believe it was this fellow Willis) they just had a few dollars left, and they had to put a two dollar and a half limit on the faro game. And he says from then on they built up a little reserve and from there on, they went into California. Then he dealt faro down around Red Bluff, California, and in through that area.

He also told me, which I thought was quite interesting, when he was a young fellow before he went on this, he was selling newspapers for his dad. He says, "You know, Pete, before I was twenty-one years old, I had six hundred dollars in Paxton's bank (that was the old bank) and I owned my own paper route." "Well," I said, "Ed, I don't understand. What is this, you owned your own paper route?" He says, "We paid five hundred dollars to Mr. Cassidy and my dad for selling newspapers in the town." I said, "You paid them?" He said, "We certainly did." And he said, "You never went into a bar and sold a newspaper that you didn't get twenty-five cents, or most of the time you got fifty cents if the gamblers were winning. Most of the people in the bars were drinking and they would always give you



fifty cents.” So it was nothing to accumulate a little. So he said he had six hundred dollars, and then he said that he went down (oh, what was the name of that place next to the garage? Some Jewish people ran it), and he thought he was a good gambler, or something. He went down, and he said it didn’t take them long to take most of his capital away from him. He later on went on this tour with this fellow Willis and went clear back to Mississippi, on the Mississippi, gambling in the faro.

I recall later years, of, ’35, and ’40, they had a faro game in Eureka. A fellow by the name of Charlie Woods had it down in the Corner Saloon, and for a couple of nights we all went down there, and we broke him. So I came up to the office and then the next day I was telling about it. So Mr. Skillman said to Mr. T. A. Burdick, he says, “Well, why don’t we go down there and do a little banking?” They were both of them approximately in their seventies then. So they did. They went down there. Mr. Burdick was a terrifically stout man; he was very corpulent, you know, had a stomach way out there. And, of course, Ed was crippled. Ed took the box with the faro game, the cards, and Mr. Burdick sat up above on what they call the lookout, and they dealt ’til about three o’clock in the morning and they broke about everybody that was there. They’d take all bets. And they won about a couple of hundred dollars apiece. Mr. Burdick had to stay home for about a week later to catch up with his sleep! He’d usually go home and go to bed about nine o’clock at night.

I think among the outstanding people, I won’t exactly call them characters, that made more history in Eureka would be old Phil Paroni, who was the butcher there and later ran a grocery store. I happened to work for him one time. He told me about the time that he was caught and tarred feathered. That was on the twenty-eighth day of January, 1888.

He was playing for a dance; he used to be a pretty good accordion player. So there was six fellows walked in there. I think this was about eleven or twelve o’clock at night and they all had a couple of six-shooters and they had handkerchiefs around their necks and they just said, “Everybody sit quiet,” and then said, “We want you.” He said he went with them and they took him up on top of Atlas Hill, up where the water tank is, directly west of the town. And they stripped him, tied his hands behind him, poured on a coat of tar and one of the fellows said, “Well, let’s burn so-and-so to the stake.” And the other fellow says, “Oh, no, no, can’t you hear the fire bells! They know that we’ve taken him. If we burn him now, they’ll see the light here. They’ll catch us when we go back into town.” He says, “He won’t dare come back into town. We’ll kill the (a lot of profanity), if he ever comes back:” But they tied his hands behind him and his feet. In stripping him, in those days they had left what you called the underdrawers; you know, all the old-timers wore them. So he told that they turned him loose.

He just had one thing in his mind: if he could get to the railroad. So he ran along the ridge of the hill and he knew he had to turn a little bit to the east. So he said he finally hit the railroad. There was a foot or two of snow on the ground, and when he started to run his underwear would hobble him and he’d try to run and he’d fall down, and he’d run and fall. So finally he kicked them loose and broke them. Everything was lovely, he said, going on the railroad track when it was on level ground and there was no culverts. But he said he would hit those culverts and he’d slip in between the ties and almost break his leg; he’d fall down there. He said he just kept on going and going and going until he got to the Twelve Mile House, I imagine two or three o’clock in the morning. There was

an old man there by the name of Barney McCool. And, of course, when he took one look at Phil Paroni, he closed the door right away. He was scared to death of this black tar all over him. Phil Paroni finally convinced McCool who he was. So McCool took him in there and washed off as much of the tar as he could and gave him a suit of clothes, some warm clothes, and put him to bed. And the next day he came up on the train. (My mother and dad have both told me about this.) When he got off the train they had the old coach there to meet him and they had a man sitting with the driver with a shotgun. And they had two men on both sides with shotguns. They put him in the coach and took him and put him in jail for safekeeping. He stayed there, but he knew every one of those six men that did this. Later on he went into business. For some reason or other, they were never convicted.

He would come into my office when he'd read in the papers and see when one of them died and he'd say, "Kit" (he couldn't say kid), (and "of it" was his pet word), he says, "Kit, so-and-so died with his boots on of it." Then another one. "You know," he says, "I cursed them, every one of them that died with their boots on. Every one of them has died with their boots on."

Why did they do this? There was rumors. Some of the oldtimers, Mother and Dad used to say, were jealous because he was a pretty good butcher and he had planned on opening a butcher shop. Others said that there was a girl involved, and that was the main reason. This girl was supposed to have gotten pregnant and he was the culprit, but he wasn't, which he proved later. He'd been married three or four times and never did have any children.

Mother used to tell me some things that weren't so nice about him. He told me that

story about being tarred and feathered so many times that I was quite familiar with it.

Then in later years, I think that was in 1920, or '21, I was the Recorder and Auditor, and Phil Paroni spent practically all the mornings over there. He'd watch me type, and look at my books, and he'd watch me in the office. I was his boy and so forth. I looked out the window and I saw him coming across the street— this was in the spring of the year— and he had a tin box. He was a little short fellow with a handlebar mustache, he had a habit of straightening his coat, and I never paid too much attention to him. But when he came into the office he had this little tin box of his where he kept his personal belongings and his securities and so forth. And he says, "Take this box." He says, "I've been poisoned." And with that he threw the box up in the air. It was strychnine and he had one of those jolts that hit him, and I caught the box and put it into my vault and locked the door. I thought there was someone coming after him. There was a couple of fellows in the office and I said, "Run and get the doctor, right away fast." So I set him up on the table in my office, and I tried to get him to lie down and put a coat under him. He said, "No, it hurts me more to lie down than it does to stand up." Every once in awhile he'd get these terrific jolts from the strychnine.

Mr. Burdick, who was the J.P., came in. We sent for the doctor. The sheriff came in. And we finally got him- -he lived right across the street, it wasn't two hundred feet—we got him over there and Dr. Brennan came along and gave him some mustard and water. "However," he says, "It's too late for anything like this , because it's in his bloodstream." But I sat there from about ten o'clock, just along about ninety-three or ten, and I was holding his wrist and he'd say, "That's the only thing that helps me." And it left. The next day he showed me—he

had my fingerprints right there—it was just black and blue from squeezing him so tight.

But he had gotten this strychnine. So then, of course, he told me all about it. He got up to eat breakfast about half past eight or nine o'clock. He just lived in a primitive old place there. He had no water in there, and he had a bucket with the dipper in it. He was a terrific eater. He had eaten his breakfast. He showed me the spoon; it wasn't a teaspoon or it wasn't a tablespoon, it was about half-way in between. It was little larger than a teaspoon. So he had this big bowl, and he had coffee, and he took two big spoonfuls of this sugar into his coffee. So while he was eating, "It was awfully hot," he said, "So I tasted it and u-m-m-m, it tasted terrible!" He just had a little bit, so he tasted it again, and he said, "It tasted awful, bitter, very bitter." So he said he just pushed the coffee to one side and went on and finished all of his breakfast. After he had eaten his breakfast he went over to this pail, this water bucket that had the dipper in it, and he took a big drink of water. But just as he drank the water, it hit him, he said his teeth just clenched on the dipper and he just started shaking. Right away quick he says, "I've been poisoned. I've got to get my box and take it to Pete." (That was me.) Evidently it was downstairs someplace, and he got down there and he got the box. Then—he used to laugh about it later—he said he came up those stairs, and he'd get one foot up and the box would jump up in the air. So finally, he said, it happened two or three times, and he just held it like this [close to his body], and he shook. He finally got up the stairs, across the Street, and into my office. Then he said, of course, "Now I'm safe because you've got the box."

He got involved, I think probably, with some rough characters there. I say again I can't mention the names because I still think there's some of the people around there. And

they just thought they'd get ahold of that box and get the mortgage papers and notes that they had and so forth, and make themselves some money. Of course, he was just too tough for them.

He was only about five-six, or five-five. He had taken a couple of trips to Switzerland. His people were doctors in Berkeley, and he had some very nice people in Switzerland. I worked for him way back in 1912 or '15. He had a regular storeboy. He was running the store. He had become ill and I walked in and he said, "You want a job?" And I said, "Yes." So I drove his delivery wagon for him, I think it was a week or ten days. I had to go up to the Diamond mine. I never went up there one day in the summer when it wasn't pouring rain. Then up to Ruby Hill. Up at the Diamond they were all Italians, and up at Ruby Hill they were all Cousin Jacks. And, of course, when I got up to Diamond, most of them wanted me to have a little glass of wine, which I couldn't drink because I knew that I could never stand it. But I used to go up with the fellow that drove—he went up the same day—that drove for the other store. He'd take two or three of these glasses of wine. We used to come off that hill pretty fast at different times!

But Phil, I believe as tough as he was, he was in his seventies, about seventy-four, seventy-five, when he passed away. But I think Phil would have lived to be a hundred years old if he hadn't had those jolts, especially that strychnine. I never saw such a man; he'd take cherries and just throw them in his mouth, never spit out a stone, never, never spit out a stone. I watched him cook and goodness gracious me! He'd just take a rabbit and chop it all up and throw it in this pot with a bunch of potatoes and he would eat practically all of it. My dad used to sell bread; we used to sell this Dutch oven bread and he'd buy a loaf of that bread to eat.



That's another thing I nearly forgot to tell you about. I think after we closed the saloon and the restaurant—the boarding house we called it—we sold bread. My dad had a beautiful oven, just a beautiful oven, regular, you know what I mean. We have a name in Italian for it, but a Dutch oven. He made it with fire brick on the base and all built in. And he could put, I think, around seventy, seventy-five loaves in there at one time. I remember quite well because I was in high school then. I used to enjoy the arguments my dad and mother would get in, because all Mother would have to do was to put her hand in the oven and she'd say, "It's right," or "It's too hot." But my dad wouldn't trust her hand or anything else. He took a long stick with a piece of paper on it, white paper, and put it in there and after it browned so much, then he knew it was right.

They would build this big fire in this oven. Then they'd pull all the fire out, and then they'd swab it out with a big long stick with a big long mop on it. And then they came with another cloth. The brick was very smooth. Then they had these long paddles and they put the bread on the paddle, turned it over, and Mother cut a cross in it. All the bread naturally had to have the cut in it. Then they pushed it in there, and then set it where they wanted it, and then they'd pull the paddle out. Oh, one time we were selling sixty, seventy loaves every two or three days 'til Mother finally rebelled and she says, "No, this is just too much work." My sisters used to love to have them bake bread along this time of the year, Thanksgiving or Christmas, and they'd bake their fruitcakes. Mother never made fruitcakes, my sisters made those, and the plain cakes. You just put them in the oven and forget them; all night long let them stand and they would just cook the next day just perfect, just brown and nice.

That's one of my memories that I had. My dad and I got into quite an argument when he

wanted to tear the place down, the oven, and I didn't want him to tear it down. I said, "Aw, let it stay." "I have to have room for the chickens. I have to have room to put my wood." "Oh," I said, "Pop, it's the nicest." The man that built that oven is the man that built those houses out here at Stewart (all that beautiful stone). He was an artist. I tried to get my dad not to tear it down, but he did, so that was ended.

I don't think I've eaten Dutch oven bread since. I can remember coming home from school in the winter and it was two, three, or four below zero. And just when you turned into the gate, you smelled that hot bread cooking. Mother used to make something for us. She would roll the dough into a roll about three feet long, and she'd twist it all, and on top of it she'd put a fresh egg. We called that a carnastrello. We'd all fight to see who'd get that because it was all crust and every one of us loved it. I don't think there's any of us that liked the bread itself. If we couldn't get the crust we all were disappointed. Later on, my wife—she's a wonderful cook—and she made these big high biscuits, and I'd take the insides out. I love the crusts; I just don't care for the bread.

So we used to eat a lot of that, and we used to eat quite a bit of—they used to make, dry the bread—panatella, you know that real hard kind.

Another outstanding character was John F. Sexton, a man that I knew quite well because he used to come up to my house with Senator McCarran way back in '16 and '17, along in there. Pat McCarran was an attorney, and he used to come up to the house quite often and he'd bring Mr. Sexton up and they'd have a ravioli dinner. I remember quite well, we were such good friends.

In 1920, I took my father back to Mayo brothers and when we left Eureka we were to go to Rochester, Minnesota. But after we got on the train, Mr. Sexton tried to convince me

that I should take my dad to San Francisco. "It's not so far," he said, "And I've got a doctor down there by the name of Dr. Zumwalt that is a real high-class man." And I said, "I'm sorry Mr. Sexton, I've been instructed. We were all told before we left that I was to take my dad to Mayo brothers and not San Francisco, and Mayo brothers it has to be." "That's the way with you young bull-headed young fellows, that's the way you want to do it. Well, that's it."

So Mother had put up a tremendous lunch for us. This was 1920, and, of course, it was dry, but we did have a few bottles of beer left, and my dad said, "You just as well take those along." He couldn't do it, he couldn't take any, but I could. So Mr. Sexton knew what a cook my mother was and he had had stomach trouble. We were sitting in this coach. (Charles E. Van Loan said it came to Eureka one week, and tried to get back the next.) We just joggled along. We got on the train at eight o'clock and we probably got into Palisade about three in the afternoon, eighty-four miles. At noon I opened up this lunch and my dad said, "You gonna ask Mr. Sexton?" And I said, "Well, maybe he's still angry with me because I wouldn't take you to San Francisco." "No," he said, "You'd better ask." So he came along the coach and I said, "Mr. Sexton, would you care to have a little lunch?" And we had, I don't know, I know we had this fried chicken in there and Lord knows, sandwiches and everything else. "No, no," he says, "I can't eat that stuff, I just can't eat that stuff."

"Well," I said, "I'm sorry, we got plenty here." And I said, "My dad doesn't eat hardly at all." So I was sitting there and I had this chicken and sandwiches and was eating away and had a bottle of beer, and Mr. Sexton walked back and forth. Finally he says, "Oh, hell move over will you?" And so I moved over. He sat down and soon just was eating

chicken and sandwiches, and he had a bottle of beer.

So we got to Palisade and he said, "You don't have any reservations to go to Rochester, Minnesota." I said, "Well, we're going to get on a train somewhere." He said, "You can't get a Pullman for love of money." "Well," I says, "We'll have to take the chair car then 'til we can get a Pullman." "Well," he says, "You'd better come with me." So I went into the Southern Pacific office. He wrote out a telegram to the conductor on this No. 19 going west, 20 going east, and he said, "Reserve lower berth for me from Elko to Omaha," and signed it, J. E. Sexton. He gave me the copy of it, and on the copy of it he put the conductor's name, which I don't recall right now. He said "Bill," or "Joe, this berth is not for me, but for a very dear friend of mine, treat him right." Now he says, "When you get on the train," he says, "You give this to the conductor," and he says, "You can slip him a dollar if you want. It doesn't hurt. They all like it," which I did.

Of course, they said, "You can't get on this train," after we'd been there. "You can't stay on here." And I said, "Just a minute." I didn't want everybody to see me, and I just called the conductor and I gave him this copy of this telegram, "Oh, oh, Mr. Sexton, Mr. Sexton." I said, "Yes." "Fine, fine, fine," he says, "I don't think we have to wait 'til Elko." He says, "How about your dad, do you want the berth made down now?" "Oh, no, that isn't necessary," I says, "We can wait." Well, he called the porter and he said, "You'd better rest."

So that's the only berth they had at that time. I remembered the Pullman porter squawked a little bit. "This is reserved for so-and-so." "Well, that's your tough luck, it's not going to be there, that's all." "They got this berth and we have to have it." "It's for Mr. Sexton."

So we got the same care from then until we got to Omaha, the same care. He was known all over the railroad circles, from one end of the transportation lines to the other, because when his name was mentioned, everyone paid attention. When we came back, he was there to meet us in Palisade. I have never seen such a man.

One time, knowing him so well, when I left to go to the University I told him about it. He said, "Now, anytime," he says, "You're coming back, if you let me know, you just let me know," and he said, "We'll see that you don't miss a train." Well, when I got out of the service, my train never got to Palisade 'til about nine-thirty or ten o'clock, and I knew that they left at eight. And stupidly, I wired Mr. John E. Sexton, "Will be in Palisade at 9:30. Hold train for me to Eureka." And when I got to Palisade, if I wasn't told: He came over—I was on the Western Pacific across the tracks—and he said, "Who in the Sam-hill do you think you are?" I said, "I'm just Pete, that's all." "Yes, but to send a wire over the wires, 'Hold train for me.' My goodness what do the ICC and the rest of them think of this?" And I said, "I don't know." He says, "I told you all you had to do was say 'see you in Palisade this morning.' I'd have known." So I thought he was mad. I says, "Well, I'm sorry." So I grabbed my suitcases, and he said, "No, I'll take care of those." So he took my suitcases and gave them to one of his flunkies that he had around, and he said, "Take those and put them over in the coach." He says, "You got your ticket?" And I said, "Nope," "Well," he says, "We don't take government papers," which he didn't. He never honored any pass of the government. You know the requisitions when you got out. He never honored any of them. "I'm not keeping books for Uncle Sam." So I had to go over and put out my \$8.30 and got a ticket. And he said, "You got enough

money?" I said, "Yes." Then I had to send in, of course, for the refund from the dispersing office later on.

So he said, "Well," and he said this pretty quiet. (I think this was about the eighteenth of December.) He said, "Did you ever run a train?" I said, "No, I never have." He says, "You're going to run one now." So he gave me two and a half or three dollars and says, "You take the train into Eureka." "Well," I said, "Mr. Sexton, I don't know a thing about it." "Well," he said, "You'll see. Now here's the Rand ranch, you throw those papers over there. Here's the Hay ranch, you throw those to the Hay ranch. Keep the fire going in the coach." So for once in my life I was a conductor for one day from Palisade to Eureka.

He defied the government, but he was about as patriotic a citizen as you ever found. He lived in Eureka County and every war drive—you know the old Liberty bonds that we sold, Liberty loan drives, we had three or four of them—Mr. Sexton put us over the top practically every time. He'd just buy these bonds for us and we went over the top, but he wouldn't let no one dictate to him. Uncle Sam said he was going to carry parcel post. He said, "No, I'm not going to carry it." "You will." So they forced him to carry it.

About the first load was a load of butter for the Eureka Cash Store. In those days it came in a little square cartons, cardboard boxes. So he told his conductor, he says, "Put that butter on the coach, right by the stove." And he says, "Be sure you keep that stove red-hot all the way from Palisade to Eureka," which he did. So you know the condition of the butter when he got to Eureka. It was just hardly no butter. Every package was leaking.

They fought that, and we had to get our mail then by stage for quite some time. until they finally came to an agreement. But the Interstate Commerce Commission at one

time, had an attorney from San Francisco. He was going to start an action against Sexton. And in those days—whether it is now or not, I don't know—they had control of any railroad that had over a hundred miles of track. So they started this action. It went on for several months and was postponed. So when the Interstate boys came up there to find out why he wasn't complying with their rules, he said, "I don't come under your jurisdiction." "Oh, yes you do. You're over a hundred miles." He said, "That's what you think." He had gone up in the night and had his crew, they pulled all of the track out from Ruby Hill halfway down to the cemetery, and he only had ninety-seven or ninety-eight miles. So he didn't come under the jurisdiction of the ICC. Oh, he was terrible.

I think it was during the first World War, he had gotten mad about something. And he put a sign in the coach, "Dogs and Japs not allowed." And, of course, some were there. There were quite a few Japanese boys from the University of California and so forth working on the railroad to make a few dollars. They reported it to the consul in San Francisco. The consul in San Francisco called Washington, took it up with the State Department. The State Department sent a man out to Palisade to see Mr. Sexton. And Mr. Sexton says, "You haven't got a damn thing to do with me." He said, "That's my coach and I'll put anything I want on it. It's not bothering you in the least." That's all the satisfaction they got.

Another time he wanted a flange of some kind for his railroad. So he told the conductor to put it on train No. 19 going west from Elko. "You don't have to stop." He said, "Just throw it off because you can't hurt it." Palisade in those days was a flag stop. If you had passengers you flagged for them, but if you didn't, they didn't stop. Well, the train whizzed by, and no flange. That did it. I'll tell you Mr. Sexton was so hot,

upset, and everything else that the next day when his train came from Eureka about two o'clock he left it—and he had the right of way by the way; the narrow gauge railroad had the right of way over the Southern Pacific—in the crossing. So he put his train there and kept it there. And, of course, when No. 19 came through it couldn't get through; it couldn't get the green light. So they were looking all over. No engineers, no Sexton, no one there. So they were frantic. They were calling Ogden, they were calling San Francisco, they were calling all over the country. They were hung up there for about two or three hours. Finally they got ahold of Mr. Sexton. They said, "What's the matter?" "Oh," he says, I guess we ran out of coal or something." So he pulled the train off then. And he finally said, "Well, when I order a flange from Elko, I'd better have that flange." From then on, he got anything he ever wanted, because he had that right of way and he was the king.

I remember one time there was a lady who was a district attorney, and she served papers on him. And he sent these papers back. He never sent anything through the mail because the language he used was terrific. You couldn't catch him for sending it through the mails; he'd always deliver it by personal courier or something like that. When they served the papers, he sent his conductor or one of the Hawkins boys down to the red light district to give one of the girls down there twenty-five dollars to serve the papers on this lady district attorney.

He was a character. He was as just as nice a man around home. My sister used to stop over there when she was going to summer school. She'd visit the Sextons in Palisade. She'd always stay there until train time. And he was just marvelous. He was just as meek as a lamb around home, but I tell you around that depot or around the yards he was terrific

He served a prison term in California for some kind of fraud. That is the talk. He served that for Whittell. I don't know if it's true or not, but I've heard it. He was paid off by Whittell and D. O. Mills, because when John E. Sexton passed away, he left over three hundred thousand dollars, I think, and all of that money went to his wife, and a thousand dollars to Gene, and another one to Mike, and another one to Charlie.

I remember Charlie Sexton quite well. That's Judge Sexton's dad. I remember reading in his will, a codicil that he put on there for Charlie being so smart, "I'll cut him down a thousand dollars." They never did get any of that money. It all went to a chauffeur, Mrs. Sexton's chauffeur. They never had a car and they always stayed at the Palace Hotel.

By the way, Sexton entertained during the 1920 Presidential election. I think his suite in the Palace Hotel entertained more notables than anyone in San Francisco. He had William McAdoo there, and Mr. Cox, I think, and all of the notables that were running for President were there.

I liked Mr. Sexton. I recall this as a boy. One time I met him. It was a Sunday. He said, "Can you get me a paper? I wish you would, a Sentinel." He gave me a dime and I got the Sentinel for him and I ran halfway to the depot to deliver it while he was walking down. He walked to the depot, then he gave me twenty-five cents for delivering that Sentinel. I thought, "Boy, oh boy, what a wonderful man" Twenty-five cents was a lot of money in those days.

I can remember Adolphus Fitzgerald for about, oh, at least ten or fifteen years while he was there. And I remember calling on him. One time we had written to the Georgia foundation, because my sister-in-law was a victim of infantile paralysis when she was a year and a half old. At that time, President

Roosevelt had visited the Georgia foundation and it was supposed to have done a lot for him. We had written back there and we got no reply. So I said I would know how to do this. So I went up and talked to Judge Fitzgerald. He took down everything that I had told him and wrote. And goodness gracious! In ten days he had a reply from Georgia.

I truly do not know too much about A. L. Fitzgerald outside of being a very good friend of the family. In fact, he was very close to my dad. My dad got a lot of legal advice from him at various times and he was a splendid old gentleman. I don't recall where he was from. I think it was South Carolina.

I talked to him many, many times. He was quite interested in mining. As I say, he left with his estate several properties which passed on to his sons, I believe. Gordon Fitzgerald and Lincoln Fitzgerald, I believe.

If I can get back to my dad, I can recall when he first came here with the winter of '78, '79 along in there, '80. They were stationed, if you want to call it that, stationed there cutting pine trees at Spruce Mountain area. They had nothing to eat but salt pork and macaroni and something on that order but no fresh meat of any kind. So one day they were out and they saw a porcupine under a tree and a fellow sneaked up on him and hit over the head with an ax, so that it killed it immediately. And they skinned him and cleaned him and cooked him, and he was exceptionally good. So then, of course, they went hunting for porcupine. When they did find one, they ran him all over the countryside and then shot him. And he said the meat was something terrible. The animal had become warm, and he said the meat tasted just like turpentine. So they were up there all winter with just that little meat.

In the spring of the year, he said there was still a couple of feet of snow up in the



mountains and they had seen these cattle down in the valley. So they decided they'd go down and get one. Dad said he and another fellow went down, and this fellow had the rifle, and they sneaked up on the young steer there (or heifer, I can't remember which it was), and they killed it and cut its throat and cut off its head and cut it into two parts. And they started back up the mountain. He said this was a moonlit night, it was about eight o'clock when they killed the cow, and they trudged on and on and on. After they got about halfway or three-quarters of the way up, the other fellow said, "I'm not going to carry this any further. I'm all in." So he threw his half in the snowbank. My dad, being without meat for so long would pack his half for a hundred yards and then go back and get this other half for a hundred yards and then go back and get this other half and carry it. He said it was about four or five o'clock in the morning when he got back, but he said they had the whole animal. They hung it up and they had some good meat for the rest of the year up there at Spruce Mountain.

I can recall his boots; I swear that each one of his boots weighed at least five pounds. That's not an exaggeration. They had very, very thick leather, thick soles, and the heels were a solid mass of hobnails, as was the sole. They never had laces; they had big buckles on the shoe instead of laces. And we used to have a pair of them we kept around the house for a long time, but unfortunately we threw them away.

And there is the story of these hurdy gurdy houses. When these charcoal burners and everyone came in with these boots and would dance, they had to change these pine floors quite often. And as they said, "the same boys and the same girls, but not the same half dollar."

I remember the houses of prostitution, and I remember the old law that they had

that they had to be a certain distance from the schools or a church. So they discovered that the ones down at the lower end of Buel Street were too close to the new high school that was being built, so they moved the house clear up to the upper end of town.

But while they were down there, we had a character that we called Red Roaring Jack Delaney. Jack was a mining man, a pretty fine old fellow, but he just couldn't keep out of trouble when he got a little bit too much to drink. He played poker. one night up there, and he lost everything he had. And, of course, he was pretty drunk. He went outside and he went up to his cabin and came back and tied a handkerchief around his face. He had a six-shooter about a foot and a half long, and he held up the poker game and took all the money they had, with the exception of the money from the Chinaman, old Fat Ock, as we used to call him. Then Red Roaring Jack dashed home with the loot and the fellow that owned the place ran after him, but he couldn't catch him. The owner fired a few shots; just put his gun around the corner of the barn up there, the livery stable right on Main Street and shot. You know; he could have shot him in some of those homes up in the hills. So the result was that they were both fined three hundred dollars. Red Roaring had to give his money back. He had a friend that he worked for in a mine and the friend would pass the hat and we'd all put up twenty-five or thirty dollars to get Red Roaring out of jail and pay his fine. Everything would be fine for three or four months, and Red would get on another bender.

This one particular night he went down to the red light district and they were closed up and he said, "Open up!" They told him they were closed. He said, "Open up or I'm going to start blasting!" They said, "No, we're closed." There was another fellow with him

and he says, "Go ahead, Red,"—he was tight too—"Go ahead and start blasting." So Red pulled out this big old six-shooter and shot through the window and the shot went right under a mattress. Well, he was arrested again. That cost him another three hundred dollars, and, of course, the hat was passed. We all put up, and Red stayed sober until he paid back all of that money. That's a couple of the escapades of Red Roaring.

We had another character there by the name of Sagebrush Sam—I can't remember his right name. He used to tell me time and time again that Death Valley Scotty was the biggest phony that ever lived. And he says, "I know he never found a pound of ore in his life," which is true.

Sagebrush had a good memory and recalled a lot of the old things that happened there. He also loved to play poker and one night he was quite lucky when he played poker. He lived about, I would say about three-quarters of a mile up the canyon—that would be Ruby Hill Canyon. He had won two or three hundred dollars, and a young fellow knew that he had won that, so he dashed out ahead of him and hid behind his cabin up on the sidehill at Ruby Hill Canyon. And as Sagebrush Sam was just about ready to go in the door, the young man hit him over the head with some blunt instrument; I think it was a pipe. But Sam, who was up in his seventies, he wouldn't go down. The kid hit him again and again. Sam finally went down, and the young fellow took his money. But Sam came to right away, and he went right straight down to the courthouse and told the sheriff, and they went down to the hotel. Sam had a good idea who it was and they went down to the hotel and they caught this fellow changing his clothes and trying to wash off some of the blood. So Sagebrush Sam ran around town with a bandage around his head for a while,

but he never spent a day in bed or a day in the hospital. He ran around town with a bandage for a couple or three weeks and took it off. The man went to prison down here. That was either his first or his second offense. I would say this was in the late '20's, '24, or '25, not back in the old days. These were characters.

At that time, the Holly mine was running, and a couple of smaller mines. Mine production at that time wasn't so high. However, on the old assessment rolls, the net proceeds of mines showed that Eureka produced up until about 1890 or 1900, about a hundred million dollars. Of course, they were all padded. As you know, all of the net proceeds were not checked as they are today. They put almost whatever they wanted down there. But Eureka did produce in the neighborhood of about a hundred million dollars.

A Mr. Davis, Eugene Davis, moved into the picture in the early twenties, 1919, and 1920, and he bought up all the mining claims that he could get hold of, and he formed a dozen corporations. He even bought the old Fletcher livery barn and he said he'd have his own teams and so forth that would haul the ore down. However, he didn't ship but a few pounds of ore.

I worked at that time up at the Eureka-Croesus and he had about forty or fifty men, maybe sixty men, working up there. He was the greatest promoter, I guess, that they had ever seen, one of the greatest that they had ever seen in the country. I understand that he sold the Pope of Rome on the idea of first appearing on radio. He had another man with him that was almost as good, by the name of Frank Torres. But Eugene Davis formed the Eureka-Croesus and the Eureka Prince and the Eureka King—-and there's a couple more Eureka's—and he sold stock in every one of those companies.

At that time, after working there for a while, I was elected in 1922 as county Recorder and Auditor. And I got letters—tremendous letters—from Boston, New York, Detroit, Pennsylvania, and I more or less kept a little record of them. And I will say that the No. 1, should say “sucker,” was the attorneys that bought stock in these mining companies. No. 1 were the attorneys, No. 2 were doctors, and No. 3 were the schoolteachers. And I would get these letters, “I am a schoolteacher and have been teaching school and I invested five hundred dollars in Eureka-Croesus stock. Could you tell me the value of the stock.” And that was my sorry job to tell them (I wasn’t a member of the company, but they wrote to me as county recorder), and I would tell them, “I’m very sorry but the stock is off the board and its value is. . .” and so forth.

During that time he bought the Brown Hotel and as I say, the livery barn, and he bought horses and wagons. They hauled not a great deal, but he had them nevertheless. That went on for two or three years.

Back to my time, not back in the old days, they had a lot of characters there that you couldn’t name and they were never brought into court, you know, and never convicted. For instance, there was an old fellow that we knew up there quite well that used to come in from Antelope Valley by the name of Bart Cerrutti. And Bart never bothered anyone. He had his squaw and so forth, and he’d come into town every three or four months and get on a big drunk. This time he came in and didn’t have his squaw. He went out and someone had given him a bottle of whiskey. They found him dead with his team just before he got to the ranch. He got thirsty and wanted to take a drink. I recall well seeing the bottle of whiskey in the attorney’s office and strychnine was in the bottle. They had his stomach in for a test, I think, at the University. But they never did

find out who did it. They all had pretty good ideas of who did it. My dad always thought that he knew, so did a good many other people.

I also remember a lady that lived directly behind us. This was along about 1908 or ’09. A lot of their people were still living; in fact, I had a call from one of her boys here awhile back. I guess she was a widow and there was a little jealousy there. They had put four or five sticks of dynamite under her porch, the front porch, and set it off. She heard this noise, and fortunately, instead of going out the front way of the house, she went out the kitchen door, the back, when this thing went off. It just shattered the house and everyone. But my brother and I, who were sleeping across the way, we never heard it. We were kids about twelve or thirteen years old. Everyone else heard it, and they never did find out exactly who did it. In fact, the saying was in the old days if you want to commit a crime, come to Eureka and do it, and you get off free.

Harry Ivester came there and he shot and killed Fred Hurd, down in Beowawe. It was like television, as I understand it, and from the testimony and from Mrs. Hurd. This place in Beowawe had an outside stairway and Fred Hurd was going up this outside stairway, just going into the door when Harry called at him and he turned around, and as he did, he let Fred have it with his luger. I’ve seen a luger many times. Fred just came tumbling down the stairs as you see in westerns. And they tried Harry for murder, and for some reason or other they acquitted him.

It was a few years later that Harry went down to Willow Creek and there was a Mexican working there. Harry blasted the Mexican right in the face with a shotgun. I went down and helped survey, the distance and so forth, and then the district attorney had this picture taken of the Mexican with



all these pellets. There was just hundreds of them. I never saw anything like it in my life. They were all around his face and his eyes but not one hit his eye—either eye. So once again they tried him, and he went scot-free.

But he later on went down to Gold Acres, I think it was, out in the northern part of the county, and he was tending to an ore chute. The story is, that they want to say that maybe he just slipped and fell in, but the real story is that somebody just gave him a push just before the end, and they unloaded the chute with ten or fifteen tons of dirt on top of him. So that was the end of Harry Ivester.

I happened to be in the courthouse from 1919 to 1950, so I was a little bit acquainted with all of these murders, and people that were found dead out in the sticks somewhere.

My dad used to tell about others, of course, after he had retired after 1918. In 1920, I got married, and in 1921, I built a house. He used to come up. He didn't have anything to do, but he had a nice piece of ground along side of my home, an acre or so. He always prided himself that it was the finest garden that they had ever seen in Eureka. He raised a cauliflower one time that weighed sixteen pounds: Now that's unheard of. The leaves, when I stood up, were as tall as I was. And he spent his time gardening, or he'd come up and chop wood for me. We'd always used cedar wood in the kitchen in our range, because we never had electricity and we never had gas. In fact, my house was one of the first houses in Eureka in 1920 that had electricity. That's getting pretty primitive for that time.

Dad would say sometime on a Sunday or Saturday when I wasn't working, he'd say, "Let's take a little walk." And we'd walk up toward the slide dumps as we called them, which is just directly south of town, practically in town. So he'd walk and he'd tell me different people that lived there. Now he'd say, "This man that

lived in the cabin died. He was killed. And I know that he left several thousand dollars, but he always said that he buried it. He wasn't going to let anybody get ahold of it, the banks or no one else." And he says, "When he died, the Italian Benevolent Society and the rest of them took up a collection and they had to bury him." And that went on in several cases.

There was the case of Bill Dooley. Of course, that was in my time when Bill Dooley died. We went up there, the sheriff and myself and the doctor and the coroner. Bill was an old character around there. Walking across the floor, we found a loose board. We pulled that up and we found, I think it was \$1,500 in \$20 gold pieces in a little tin can that was right under the floor. I remember Dr. G. M. Roberts bought that gold. And then later on he got tight and he was banking a twenty-one game and he lost it all playing twenty-one.

But most of the money was buried that way in those old days because the bank had gone broke in 1910, and it took many and many a year. New banking wasn't started until 1920. And even at that, when I was Recorder and Auditor, I had as high as \$75,000 in my safe in cash and negotiable bonds because people were skeptical. Finally, I told the people that goodness gracious! I just couldn't keep that much money in here. If something happened to me or something, of course, I had it all marked, "This is the property of so-and-so and so-and-so." But, I said, "I think you'd just better go to the bank, and if you don't want to put it on deposit, then just use a safety deposit box." It was too much in there, cash and so forth, to be carrying in there.

There was many of those old characters around Eureka that died and left money. There was an old fellow, his name was Naldo Beffa. And he had become very, very ill and he kept gasping for "Henry, Henry." That was a favorite, wasn't related to him but that was a

favorite young follower that he had. This boy Henry was working down at the Sadler ranch, haying. They sent word to him that his old friend Naldo was dying, and he took a horse and he rode that thirty-five miles up there in just a few hours, but when he got there, he couldn't hardly understand him. Something about Fish Creek, or something on that order. So he just happened to forget about it. This was, I would say, back in the twenties.

About twenty years later, it was in the forties, Mr. William A. Batholeme had bought the Fish Creek ranch. And this young boy, I would say about seventeen or eighteen walked into the ranch and asked the cook there, he said, "Can I get a job?" And the cook says, "No, we don't need anyone now, but if you want to stick around for a little while and earn your board and room," he said, "I can give you something to do around the kitchen." And the kid says, "Well, I'm pretty tired and hungry." And the cook says, "Well, go ahead and eat tonight and then you sleep. Tomorrow," he says, "you can start by digging up that sewer. The sewer line is plugged out there." So the next day the young fellow started the digging on the sewer and after he had dug for a couple of hours, he came in with four or five \$20 gold pieces and he says to the cook, "What are these?" "Well," the cook says, "those are \$20 gold pieces." "Oh, goodness," he says, "there's a lot of them out here." So he went out there and I think they found fifty or sixty \$20 gold pieces. And the cook says, "Well, this is money son. You take half and I'll take half." So he split it. We always thought this was the money that Naldo Beffa was always trying to tell Henry about over at Fish Creek, because he worked there at one time. He buried it out there, and that was a thousand dollars that was discovered.

Now there's all kinds of money around those hills, my dad told me. Those old charcoal

burners and those old fellows that worked at the smelter would not trust anybody, and they always buried their money. In fact, my dad buried eight hundred dollars under the tank in the yard one time. We went out and dug it up one night, before we took him to Rochester, Minnesota. He'd say, "You go out there," (he'd had this terrific hemorrhage from ulcers), and he came out and showed me. He says, "Now you go five feet from the corner of that post." And I did. And he said, "Now you dig down there about eight or nine inches." And I did, there was this can. And instead of forty, he didn't count right, he put forty-one, so we had \$820. I took the extra \$20 and took it back to Rochester with me and had a lot of fun trying to buy a package of cigarettes with it. This fellow in the pool hail says, "Oh no, no, no, I don't want anything." "Well," I said, "it's a \$20 gold piece." "I don't care. I'll have to take it to the bank to find out if it's any good and all that." He says, "You take the cigarettes and pay me some other time." I had known him; that is, living up there for the six weeks. There was a lot of burying around Eureka.

I want to tell about this fellow Dan Kelly, when he came into Eureka, an old prospector with his string of mules. A very, very interesting character, and what a memory! My God, it was just tremendous. The things that he would remember. And I can remember very distinctly when he first came into Eureka, he stopped up by the old log cabin—of course, we were probably eight or nine years old—so we dashed up there so we could help him set camp, and ask if we could ride his donkeys. The typical prospector always had four or five donkeys, so if we could get a chance to ride his donkeys we dashed up, no matter who the prospector. When we'd get there—Dan was real well-read—he'd ask us kids a lot of questions about our school. Dan stayed there then from 1908 or '10, because

Eureka is a very highly mineralized area. (Dr. Tom Nolan, who's back in Washington, said it's one of the most highly mineralized areas in the United States; that and the Hamilton area.) So Dan spent the rest of his time locating claims. Once in a while he'd sell one. He could tell you about things that happened in Thermopolis, Wyoming, that happened way back there when he was a boy eight or nine years old. He was then a man about sixty-five.

During the first World War, we heard a lot about subversive activities. Eureka had a large immigrant population, but there was only one that was a big scandal, and there was a law suit. Judge William Reynolds was then District Attorney, and he was on the draft board (not the council of defense). He was on the draft board, and Edna Covert Plummer, who was his opposition, and Dr. W. H. Brennan, who hated him with a vengeance, tried to frame him and say that he took some kind of remuneration to keep a fellow by the name of Louis Palma out of the service. So, of course, we had a big law suit. Judge Reynolds was found (later on he was a judge) not guilty. His attorneys were Joe McNamara and Cary Van Fleet of Elko, two of the finest that you could get in those days. In fact, I think Joe McNamara, next to Senator McCarran, was probably one of the best criminal lawyers they had in the state.

I was very friendly with Bill Reynolds, and I can remember one so well in summing up the case Joe McNamara won over everything fine. Cary Van Fleet was quite a character and a smart attorney. He said that night in the summation—this was right after the First World War—he said, “The big guns of Germany have been silenced, but the little guns in Eureka, Dr. Brennan and Edna Covert Plummer, are still spitting out fire and brimstone.” That happened in 1919, I guess, a long time ago, but I never did forget it.

But the council of defense, I don't think they had any trouble at all. For instance, my cousin came over from Italy, and he could have claimed exemption from the army for being an alien, as they did in those days, but he wouldn't. He enlisted and went into the service and went all through the war with Mr. F. N. Dondero (he was in his company) and Harvey Payne. So he went through the service and came out and never got a scratch.

You know in those days, they were watching the German people and so forth, to see if there was any German sympathizers. However, I don't recall of any that we had in there. I know that we had a lot of drives for the Liberty Loan drives. Mr. Sexton always put us over the top. I remember my dad one time leading the parade.. We had a parade and this one particular drive, Sexton was the biggest subscriber. He bought five thousand dollars worth of Liberty Loan bonds. Eureka always went over the top big for that very reason.

We had a few Prohibition problems. There wasn't too many bootleggers in the Eureka area. However, the thing that stands out in December of 1922, is that a Prohi was killed in Pine Valley on the Bob Raines' ranch. I think his name was Asa Carter. So Bob Raines and Jack Brite were arrested, I believe, on the thirtieth or thirty-first day of December, 1922. Why I remember that so well, is because I took office on January the first, 1923, on my own. I had been a deputy, and the fellow that had run for sheriff was going to take office. So the fellow that he had defeated was going out of office. He said, “There's no sense of me going into this. I'll deputize you and you go down and pick up those fellows, because you'll be familiar with them.” So that's how I remember those dates so well. That's why I have such a good memory of the case.

So they were brought into court and they were tried and they were eventually found

not guilty. I believe that Judge McNamara was the judge. Judge Ben Curler, and M. B. Moore, and I think, Jim Dysart were the attorneys for the defense, and Reynolds and Eather were prosecutors. Eather was a new district attorney. Ted Carville was associated with them in the prosecution. But I know they were found not guilty, and very shortly after that I recorded the chattel and real mortgage for some forty-odd thousand dollars that Bob Raines gave Ben Curler, so he evidently paid Ben Curler at least forty thousand dollars for getting out of it. They didn't definitely prove their case, that there was other biases involved. There was other people that might have shot him, but they were so sure. And anytime you create a doubt in the juror's mind, they're going to bring in a verdict of not guilty.

I remember the Prohis came in. Cap Donnelley, who was the head of the Prohis, was in there, and Percy Nash, who was a Prohi agent, and Pete Dubois. They were all there as witnesses. Sheriff J. M. Hillhouse came up as a witness. Jake Fulmer, United States Marshall, was there. We had a great time with those boys there.

During Prohibition, I don't think they caught too many. I remember one time they caught the bootleggers out there at Antelope, and I quit drinking after that for about a week or so because they confiscated these two barrels of liquor. And then a few months later they got an order from the court to destroy it. So they took the liquor and they rolled it out the back door of the sheriff's office into the gutter and they knocked out the end of it and let it roll down the sewer and then turned the fire hose in there. But when they got down to the bottom of the barrel there were just all kinds of gophers and squirrels and wood rats, and, of course, that liquor had burned all the hair off of them and it wasn't a very pleasant sight. So I didn't drink any "jackass," as they

called it, for several weeks after that. Had no taste for it.

The feelings of the community were very much against the Prohis, and nobody was in sympathy with the prohibition law, particularly in a mining camp. Not that they weren't law-abiding, but as far as the prohibition law was concerned, they just didn't believe in upholding it. I will say except for my dad, because in 1918, when it went dry, he sold out right now and got out of that. He didn't want any part of it. And we often told him that that's where he could have made his money instead of going all through those lean, lean years. No, he said, he liked to sleep at night.

We had quite a celebration with repeal of prohibition there. I don't think anybody had any liquor stored up or anything, because I remember right after that, the town was going to have a big celebration at Labor Day and they still weren't able to get beer. So they asked me if I could see if I couldn't get some. All the boys that were in there asked me if I would see if I could get them some beer. And I remember real well going to Hawthorne and I met and talked to Barney O'Malia. He had the El Capitan in Hawthorne, and I did know that he had a lot of beer. So I said, "Barney, can I get a thousand cases of beer?" He says, "Yes, I'll give you a thousand cases of beer if you take a case of rum with every hundred cases of beer." "Oh," I said, "Goodness gracious, Barney, we can't use that." "Oh," he says, "That's a pretty popular drink, that Cuba Libre, you know rum and coke." "Well," I said, "You can't educate those cowboys and those miners up in my country on the Cuba Libre." I said, "Just now for our celebration we want beer." "Well," he said, "That's the deal." I says, "Well, you keep your beer and you can keep your rum," I said, "I'm very sorry." So he said, "Well, maybe we'll meet some other time." And I said, "Maybe we will." And we did meet. We met in 1950 when

I was running for State Controller. And he pointed and said, "You're the guy that wouldn't buy the rum." And I said, "That's right." We got to be good friends, and have been good friends ever since.

They had quite a celebration, the bars. I think they had a big dance up there when it came back in. Everyone was supposed to dress up in the old time pioneer costumes; it was informal. You were supposed to wear overalls and the ladies wore gingham dresses, and something like that. And we had a big dance. However, there wasn't a great deal of liquor there at that time when it came out because nobody had stored up any in Eureka. And we all had a good time.

Another celebration I remember, was the end of World War II. Everybody was shouting and hollering. I had an automatic shotgun and I went out in the backyard and started firing away. I have two daughters, and, of course, Bobby was married at the time and Johnny, her husband, was overseas yet. And she insisted on firing that shotgun. It almost set her down; it was a little bit too strong for her. Everybody all over town were firing off shotguns and rifles or something, and the fire bells were ringing. The fire bells; that's one thing we do have in Eureka. We have a lot of fine bells. The old Episcopal bell is a beautiful thing, a great big bell.

That's a strange thing. One time I was walking along there taking pictures. I have and I took a picture of that bell because it looked like the stand that it was on was going to cave in sometime. So I took that picture, and, of course, I had it with me for years and years.

After I was elected State Controller, Mae Morrison was the governor's secretary. Mrs. Morrison was telling Mae about that grand old bell of the Episcopal church. So Mae was telling me about it one day in the office. I dropped into the governor's office, and we were talking about it and she was telling me

about her mother-in-law. And she said, "She wants to see you; you're from Eureka." And I said, "Yes, well, I'll get in there," which we did. We went in and had dinner with her and we had a nice time. And I brought the picture to her, the picture of this bell, and oh, she was just pleased. Her husband used to be a vestryman or something and walk up that hill and ring the bell for the church. You look through the old Sentinel files, you'll see some notices of Dr. S. K. Morrison.

In those days, they used to all advertise their offices in the Sentinel building, or whatever it may be. One time I think I counted seventeen doctors advertised there in, I think, '79 or '80. Lord knows how many saloons, I remember when there was eleven saloons in Eureka. That's not too many years ago.

They had a lot of wonderful celebrations there. I took a crew with me one time down to Virginia City, single jackers. It was in the forties. When we got to Virginia City, we ran against the champion and his partner, and, of course, we came in third.

The mining was what always made Eureka. When the mines were running, Eureka was prosperous. Everybody made money. I saw a piece of property right across from the courthouse that a party wanted me to buy for seven hundred dollars, right between the theater and the hotel. It was only about fifteen feet wide, maybe not that wide, and they wanted to sell it to me and I wouldn't do it. Well, when that boom stirred up, and the mines started working in the twenties, a fellow came in from Idaho and paid eight thousand dollars for that little piece, and called it the Keyhole Club. I don't think he ever made a dollar. That's the life of a mining camp.

I can remember the first automobile that came into Eureka in about 1908 or '09. Old man Fred Osborne, who was a photographer, brought a car in and we used to ask if we



could ride on the running board. The thing did fifteen miles an hour; I think that was the tops. In the early twenties, I think, Nash Morgan had the fastest Dodge that ever came to Eureka. We took it down on the flat, down at Twelvemile House we called it. It was a natural gravel road, smooth. The record at that time—that's in the twenties now—the record was forty-eight miles an hour and he did get it up to about fifty-one or fifty-two, so he had the best Dodge. If you've ever ridden in one of those old Dodges that first came out, a dead-x wagon was a cushion compared to them. Goodness, they were hard!

I tipped over two or three times, although I never drove. I'll tell you the funniest thing you ever heard. I never drove a car until I came to Carson City. I never owned a car. I campaigned this whole state with my thumb. Yes, I did. I had a car in 1924, an old Model-T, and that I got rid of because it was breaking me out of business. I paid about seven hundred dollars for about four or five months repair riding with it, and that repair bill in about four or five months was about six or seven hundred dollars. I couldn't stand that. I had two children and I was getting all the big sum of \$125 a month as Recorder and Auditor.

I believe that Diamond Valley had more water than any place in the state of Nevada. When I was a boy, the old baseball team had the "Base Range" written across their uniform, and I wondered what that meant. Eureka is surrounded by Diamond Peak, Roberts Peak to the north, and south to Prospect Mountain. And that water in that valley drains clear down from Belmont through Devil's Gate. On Diamond Peak, which is almost 11,000 feet high, there is hardly ever a run-off of that mountain, although sometimes there's as much as thirty-five and forty feet of snow on the north sides of those drifts. And where does it go? It goes right into that valley. It was

definitely proven, and I think this is entirely separate from the mine. They pumped 6,500 gallons of water a minute from that mine for twenty-four hours a day from March until January, and couldn't lower the water table in the mines, which just goes to show you how much water is up in that area.

Now in Diamond Valley, they have sixty wells down there with these pumps and tremendous sprinkler systems. And those sixty wells produce around two and three thousand gallons a minute. I will venture to say, and you can check with the water conservation department, all of those sprinkler systems going at one time have never reduced the water in that valley. So I don't think you'll find anyplace else in the state where— and the water's only probably a couple hundred feet deep there—there's that kind of water underground. Of course, the water people and the state water engineer are watching that very closely. And I don't believe they're issuing any more permits for Diamond Valley at this time. There's something like 13,000 acres under cultivation, which is quite strange after living in a desert country and going down there and hunting jackrabbits for twenty years.

At the mine there it was just like, well, sixty-five hundred gallons of water a minute is just like a little river running down on the flat. The kids had a lot of fun with it, going in the flat and swimming, and then in the wintertime it would freeze over and they had a good skating rink.

I hadn't thought of that being a wet place. However, I had known for years that it was a basin, and that they would never get a runoff off of Diamond Mountain, which is 11,000 feet. It always went down, evidently, through crevices or so forth and into that floor of that valley. There must be a tremendous lake down underneath.

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## EUREKA COUNTY POLITICS AND POLITICIANS

Elections, of course, and politics was always real, real exciting up there. My dad told me the story one time about a man that ran for county commissioner. He had a campaign manager, and the two of them were drunk all the time. When the votes were counted, he only got one vote in the precinct where he lived. And, of course, right away, he blamed his campaign manager for not voting for him. His campaign manager says, "I'm sorry, I voted for you, but you were so drunk when you went in to vote, you didn't vote for yourself!" So he only got the one vote.

Blackie Wallace was an agent of the railroad, and always came into Eureka just before elections. The railroads were very much interested in controlling the legislature at that time, which I guess they did, too. That was in the days before the Australian ballot. You walked into the election booth and if you held up a blue ballot, you came out and you got your five dollars. If you voted the white ballot, you never got anything because that was the ticket that he didn't want. And he always made it a point to get into Eureka

two or three days before an election and be a good all-around Joe; you know, lost a few dollars at the poker games, and so forth. Make everyone happy. I imagine he was pretty successful in getting his tickets over. Probably did that in several counties in the state. He was the assessor out there in Eureka for many years. He was well-known in the county, like A. L. Fitzgerald, Tom Wren, Judge Bartlett, R. M. Bob Beatty, A. Skillman, Ed Skillman, and there was so many more. You have R. Sadler who was later the governor. George Cassidy and A. Skillman were both interested in the Eureka Sentinel. George Cassidy went to Congress. He died in '92.

Up in the Recorder's office in Eureka we had all the newspaper files from 1871, I think, to the present time, with the exception of one six-months issue someone took out. The Sentinel from 1870 to '71, to 1872 or '73 were the property of old Ed Skillman and he gave those to me as a gift to the county, because it wasn't compulsory prior to 1873, to file an official newspaper. And that's why those old

papers are there. They've all been rebound and they did a nice job of it.

Tom Wren was interested in mining there. He was an attorney, too. He was interested in quite a few of those mining claims up there in Prospect Mountain. Tom Wren was one of the owners of the mine later acquired by the Eureka-Croesus. I know, because Mike Murphy went down later on to contact Mrs. Wren in Reno to clear up the title at one time.

George Bartlett, at that time, was an attorney, and he was elected to Congress in Eureka. I can remember that quite well. He had one boy and three girls. Donald Bartlett, and Margaret, and Jean, and Dorothy were the girls. I think Margaret is still living in Reno.

R. M. Beatty, of course, I've seen his name on the records up there so often. He was another attorney that went quite a ways. He was before my time, but I've heard a lot, I've read quite a bit about him. He was once attorney general of Nevada.

I don't remember Archibald Skillman, but I do remember his son Ed Skillman quite well. He was the editor of the paper all the years that I was in Eureka until the last few years. He was crippled. He had quite an interesting life. He had slipped on a boat and dislocated or broke his hip, which later caused his left leg to be three inches shorter than his right leg. He ran the newspaper from the time I remember, say 1906 or '97 until 1940's, the early forties, when he became ill and passed away. Then his son took over with Ed Moyle. And Ed Moyle ran it the latter years.

It was George Cassidy in the eighties that was running the newspaper with A. Skillman. His editorials were something; the most flowery language that I ever read in my life. His description of the hurdy houses in Eureka. "The same boys and the same girls—but not the same half dollar for the dance."

Of course, so many people get the wrong impression of these hurdy-gurdy houses. They think that they were probably houses of ill-fame but they were not, they were just dance halls. Quite a few German girls came over, and Norwegian girls, and later on married and remained in Eureka there for years and years. There were several of them around there in the old days according to the old-timers, Mr. T. A. Burdick and Mr. R. McCharles, and all of those old fellows.

R. McCharles was the old clerk and treasurer there. His son was the assessor at the same time here in Carson City. T. A. Burdick was the justice of the peace—combination justice of the peace and the janitor—and they'd gather in there in the morning. I'd get in with them in the morning before work, before eight-thirty, before we go to work at nine and they'd reminisce about the old days, and so forth. That's where I learned so many things.

For instance, Mr. Burdick used to tell me about when Charles E. Van Loan wrote up the Ghost Cities of the West. He mentioned the story about Hog-eyed Mary stabbing Bull Dog Kate, and Mr. Burdick said that he remembered that quite well. I don't think they did a great deal to her. It's not a very nice subject to talk about, really. He said it was an awful looking sight.

I think that Mr. Cassidy was one of the finest newspapermen in the West at that time. Mr. Skillman was good. His favorite expression was when he'd be in the courthouse a lot, getting news, and some young couple could come in there to get married and Ed would always say, "Misguided souls, that dream of heaven." That was his pet expression.

Adolphus L. Fitzgerald was the judge out there. A very, very distinguished looking Southerner, and way, way up in the Masonic circles. I think he was one of the few, in those days, thirty-third degree Mason. I talked to



him about it. He had a wonderful library; what became of it, I don't remember. He had a nice library. He owned considerable mining property in the Eureka area. Later his sons acquired that property. Now, I believe, it is held by Mr. Dondero and Senator Alan Bible and I think, A. M. "Tom" Smith, who used to be the state engineer. I think they were the owners of the Fitzgerald property up there right now.

I graduated from high school and then, of course, went into the service, the SATC at the University of Nevada. I had intended to go to the University, but everyone was in uniform, and naturally, I had to be in uniform too.

After we were discharged I returned home and I went to work in the mines for four or five months. The county Recorder and Auditor, who was Judge Eather, and at one time my brother-in-law, asked me if I cared to go to work in the Recorder's office. I asked him what the wages were (I was getting five dollars a day mucking in the mines), and he said, "Well, we're paying seventy-five dollars a month to start." I worked for him for one month for seventy-five, the next month he raised me to ninety, then he raised me to a hundred. And then there was an agreement from then on that he would give me one-half of the recording fees which were kept by the Recorder in those days. He gave me one-half of that, one-half after they exceeded a hundred dollars. So I worked for him for three years and three months.

Then I ran for Recorder and Auditor. I believe I was twenty-two years old at the time. I thought I knew a lot about politics, and found out that I didn't. However, I was lucky enough to win the first time out by thirty-two votes. I recall going down to Beowawe where there was thirty-nine votes. Then I came home, and my wife asked me, "How are you going to do down at Beowawe?" "I know

I'm going to get thirty-eight votes. The other fellow wouldn't say whether he was going to vote for me or not." When the returns came in, I got eighteen and my opponent got twenty-one. Then I learned that they don't all vote like they drink—an old expression stolen from Ole Elliott, who was over in Ely.

I was running against a native. My dad came in '78, and his dad came into Eureka in 1877 or '76, so we were both from old families. He was married and had six children. I was married and just had one little girl at the time and we were expecting another one. It seemed like my toughest problem when I went to the north end of the county to campaign, a great many of the people in that area would say, "Well, your opponent's got six children. That's a pretty big family." I tried to counteract that by saying, "Six children doesn't necessarily make a good Recorder and Auditor. I have one, and I think that means as much to me as his six does to him." After a good battle I beat him by thirty-two votes.

We had one precinct that had eleven votes—and this is one of the most humorous things that I ever had happen to me in politics. There was an old German blacksmith down there, and he had a little ranch on a place called Pole Creek. There was another man down there in the same precinct by the name of Pete Carletti and they just didn't get along. Fritz Simmick, the old German gentleman, just didn't care for him. He detested him. So the morning of the election, he told me that they all gathered in the blacksmiths shop at the Mineral Hill voting precinct. He had known that Pete Carletti had promised me that he would vote for me, having known my dad. He also knew that Pete Carletti promised my opponent that he would vote for him, because he was also a very good friend of his. So he says to the rest of the boys, "Now, I'm going to vote for Pete Meriardo because

we feel he's a better man, but we want to all vote for him because we want to find out if Pete Carletti's a damn liar." "And you know," he says, "Pete Carletti is a damn liar because you got all the votes." Well, I thought it was pretty good. Probably if it went the other way it wouldn't be so funny, but that's what happened.

So the next time, four years after, he ran against me again. But I think I had learned a little bit about politics, and I had made some more friends and instead of beating him by thirty-two, I beat him by eighty-two. Of course, these were all just small, but in a county of about four or five hundred votes, eighty-two was a pretty good sound majority. So he told me the third time he wasn't going to run against me.

I then had a fellow by the name of A. Moore that had been living in Reno. And I suppose, some of the people up in Eureka, they didn't like me too well, although I thought I had a lot of friends. One or two of them just encouraged Mr. Moore to return to run against me for that office. But I beat him about a hundred and eighty or ninety votes. It just wasn't close, because people didn't like the idea of another man coming from the outside. That was in '30.

Then in 1934, and that was in the New Deal days, I was one of the few Republicans that remained in office throughout the state of Nevada. I think Delle Boyd in Reno, myself, and one or two over in Gardnerville or Minden. The New Dealers got this young fellow to run against me. He was a classmate of mine. We both had gone to school together; however, he hadn't graduated. But he gave me quite a race because, as I say, everything was New Deal, everything was Democrats, but I defeated him about sixty-five or seventy votes.

The personal life was difficult. We had two daughters and the salaries that I received up

there as Recorder and Auditor was about \$175 a month and later it went to \$225. In '39, my older daughter graduated from high school. She decided she wanted to go to the University of California because she wanted to major in chemistry. With the wages that I was getting, I just thought well, this was going to be a little bit rough. I was keeping books for two or three different ranches and outfits around there. And I was selling all the insurance in Eureka. I was even selling clothes. I also did all the income tax work in Eureka. And I took care of practically every Basque that ever came in there, and I got his parents from the old country and so forth. So all in all, we managed, the wife and I. The older daughter, Roberta—Bobby (Now Mrs. John Damele)—went to Cal and then two years hence Arlene (now Mrs. Willis A. DePaoli) came along, and she had won a scholarship to Colorado Women's college. She went there one year, but the war came on and the transportation was impossible. So she returned. When she came back after the first year, she went to the University of Nevada. Then she graduated, she was Phi Kappa Phi. So we were all happy about that.

My wife and I have the six grandchildren. One of them, Stephanie Damele is at the University of California and another one, Bernard C. DePaoli won a scholarship at Santa Clara. The other grandchildren include a second daughter of Roberta and John Damele, Arlene Marie, a senior at Eureka High School; and three other children of Arlene and Willis DePaoli: Stephen J., a junior at Carson High School; Virginia A., a seventh-grader at Eureka; and Terri Jean, five years old and living in Eureka.

My wife was born Dolores Mann, in Bingham Canyon near Salt Lake, in 1900. She came out to Eureka after the mines opened up the second time, '11 or '12, along in there. She

went to school for a short time, then returned to Salt Lake. She graduated there from East Side High School in 1917, and came back in 1919, I believe it was. She taught school in Eureka County from 1919 to 1920. Then we were married July 20, 1920, so we're still married after, forty-six years. Her mother, Ellen Rodgers Mann, was the first teacher in Bingham Canyon, Utah.

I have a brother, Vincent, living in Las Vegas Nevada, who is one of the bosses in the Tropicana casino. My sister, Mrs. Adeline Kelley, is now a widow, living in Reno. I have a half brother, Joe Rebaleati, eighty-three years of age, living in Sacramento , California.

Oh, I remember quite well, we used to have a lot of fun in those offices. We had an elderly fellow who was the county Assessor, Billy Hooper. And when I was a deputy in the Recorder's office, the Underwood boys would come in, the repairmen and the salesmen. They'd work our typewriters over and they showed me how to take off the carriage and clean up the keys and so forth. And the old No. 5 machine, you could take off the type bar by just releasing the back of it and lifting it off. There was only two keys on there that you could exchange, and that was the "y" and the "h," because they were both right in the center of the keyboard in the section. So the Assessor had gone to the post office, and while he was gone I went in and I switched the two keys on his typewriter; put the "y" where the "h" should be and put the "h" where "y" should be. It was a Saturday. We always had to work those days, on Saturdays. And he rushed back and he said, "Gee, I gotta get this license out." So he sat down and he wrote February, and of course, the "y" wasn't there. It kept writing "h" and he'd erase it and do it over. And he swore a few times and he said, "I'm all thumbs." By that time the paper was worn off from erasing, so he pulled it out of there and he put another

piece of paper in, and it wrote "h" again. So he stopped and he just pressed the "y" and it kept writing "h". He just flew across the room into my office and he grabbed me by the throat, "You get back there and fix my typewriter!" That was one of the things. We used to have a lot of fun around there.

Once in a while we'd get a crazy man that they'd bring in from the sticks that was out in the hills, and there'd be quite a bit of commotion around there. We could hear him back there in the jail. I remember one fellow tried to burn himself up. I remember another man hanging himself in jail while I was in the courthouse. Another fellow putting—a dreadful sight—a ten gauge shotgun right under his chin and pulling the trigger with his toes. Another fellow being shot right there. This was in 1918—I was still in high school—when Lyman Fulton and Jack Burns had made a deal with an old fellow by the name of Tom Dixon. They went into the District Attorney's office to settle the deal and evidently they didn't, because they came out and they got to the end of the hall just before going out of the courthouse, Burns and Fulton. Burns says to Fulton, "That old S.B. has a gun." And with that Mr. Dixon turned around. He says, "You're damn right I've got a gun and I can use it." And boom! But Lyman Fulton had ducked into the doorway—see those doors are set in, the walls are very thick—and he just happened to look around and the bullet hit the wall and hit him on the cheek and just creased him, went from there into the justice of the peace door, went through that door, and lodged on the other wall on the other side of the J.P.'s room.

This was in the spring of the year. We never had a stenographer in Eureka. Nash Morgan, who was the District Attorney, sent word to Mr. Priest (you know they were buddies back in Nashville, Tennessee, before

they ever came out) to send me down to take the testimony. Well, I'd only had one year of shorthand and one year of typing and I wanted out. I said, "Well, Mr. Morgan I just can't take this shorthand in a court case." "Well, we have to have someone, just take it directly onto the typewriter." Well, you can imagine trying to take down court proceedings on a typewriter with one year of typing: However, I used to type in the Recorder's office in the summer of '16, along in there. I did a lot of typing in there, and I took proceedings. I remember plainly the testimony of Fulton, I think it was, he said, "Mr. Dixon called me blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, and I returned the compliment and called him just as many." And I remember I said, "Just a minute. I'm stuck. I don't know how to spell some of those words." They were a little bit too fast for me, some of those cuss words, I didn't know how to spell them.

Then I served as Recorder and Auditor. I ran clear up to 1950. The last time I filed for Recorder was '46. And then in 1950, I ran for State Controller.

Eureka had been unique in politics and everything else. We always had a godfather, or somebody that always took care of us. For instance, the Republican party would set up Eureka County when I was up there and I was secretary and treasurer of the central committee. They'd say, "Your quota is \$750 for Eureka County." Well, that's a lot of money for a little county to raise, and with only a few votes. But we always sent to Mr. Bartholome while he was there, after he moved in in the forties. And Bill would give us a check for five or six hundred and that took the burden off of most of the rest of us. I guess Bill was about one of the wealthiest men that ever had moved into Eureka. I liked him very much. Bill and I were very good friends. When I was elected Controller, he always came and said hello to me. He was peculiar in many ways and it

was too bad that it had to end the way it did. He was killed by his sister-in-law (through a mistake), stabbed.

Eureka had some women active in politics, Doc Mabel Young and Alma Woods. Dr. Mabel ran for country treasurer one time against old Rory McCharles, or R. McCharles. I was in the courthouse at that time and I used to spend a little time, as I mentioned, in conversation. Then I used to spend a half hour with the old J.P. and Rory back in the janitor's office.

Rory always came in in the morning and he said, "What's new, Burdick?" And Burdick would say, "Well," this particular morning, "Have you heard about Dr. Mabel?" Dr. Mabel, by the way, had filed against Rory McCharles; I think she ran on the independent ticket. And Rory says, "What happened?" Burdick says, "Well, she had a hundred dollars in her mattress out there at The Willows—she had a little ranch out in Willows—and somebody stole it." "That's too bad, that's too bad." Now old Burdick was just making this up, see. "My golly, that's just too bad." Of course, it worried Rory because he probably thought it was a sympathetic gag, having lost her money and creating a few votes for sympathy.

So a week or ten days later Rory came in and he says, "Burdick, did Doc Mabel ever find her gold?" Of course, Burdick was caught flat. He said, "What gold? What are you talking about?" He says, "Burdick, you damned old liar, don't tell me you were telling me a damned lie when you told me about Doc Mabel." And I tell you Burdick just sat there and howled and Rory was just so mad at him. Anyway, he defeated her handily. It was a peculiar situation.

She was less than five feet, and Alma was about five foot-five or six. They lived together over there on Spring Street for years and years. Doc Mabel was a dentist. She pulled a tooth

for me one time. First tooth I ever had had pulled. Big tooth. My mother took care of all the rest. She'd actually have to sit up on your chest to pull the tooth because she was so tiny that standing on a box she still couldn't reach you. But she did all right there. Then they took up a little homestead out at The Willows, which is forty-five miles west of Eureka on the old Lincoln Highway, and they developed it. When Doc Mabel died she left it to Alma Woods, who eventually sold it all for \$75-80,000. I think Alma's down in Arizona now.

Of course, there's always talk about these two women living together. Alma has now a young fellow that goes down to see her every now and then. A young boy just graduated from high school a couple of years ago. Of course, you know the rumors that they start. He's about as queer as she is, or something.

I believe it was the 1926 election that Ray Baker ran against Pat McCarran and defeated Pat McCarran in the primaries. I remember talking to Pat quite a while and he said, "This is a peculiar situation." But Ray Baker was born in Eureka and so was his brother Cleve Baker who was the attorney-general. I just barely remember Cleve. I remember his skin was as white as paper. He had positively no color in his skin at all, just chalk-white. He didn't last long. If you look at the record, you'll find that Cleve probably lasted about a year or so, after being elected attorney general and then passed away.

But Ray Baker was quite a character. He defeated McCarran. And I can remember quite well. In those days they'd have the rallies and so forth. Of course, he was a native of Eureka and dwelt on that when he was in Eureka, about how his maternal grandmother was sleeping up there in the Catholic cemetery, and so forth.

Well, I kept that in mind, because a year or so later I was on that committee to help

fix the Catholic cemetery. And it was my job, being in office, to write all the letters asking for contributions. And I remembered that Ray Baker said he was born in Eureka and his people were buried up there. I wrote him a couple of letters and registered them and so forth, hoping that we'd at least get a hundred dollars out of it or something, because he always was in the money. He married into the Vanderbilt family later on, and when she divorced him the story was that she always, gave him a thousand dollars a month to live on because she couldn't—well it just wouldn't be right to—have somebody that was a former husband of Mrs. Vanderbilt going around looking ragged. He had the reputation of being the best dressed man in Washington. They always said that when he was appointed Director of the Mint that it was all a mistake, that she maneuvered that around and got from Raymond A. to Raymond T. Baker. Anyway that is the story that I heard.

After he divorced her, he married into the Dodge millions and he was well taken care of up until the time he died. Of course, Gloria Baker is still alive, I believe. She has been married a couple of times.

Ray served as Director of the Mint for several years. I think he did a pretty good job, too. He was a handsome chap. He was good-looking and well-built. He was about six foot tall or so. Real, real handsome man.

I knew Ole Elliott, who was a character over in Ely. He was a real close, personal friend of mine. I think Ole Elliott has told me stories that he's never told anybody. Ole always called himself a Pittman Republican, because he was up in Alaska with Key Pittman.

Of course, quite a character in himself was Key Pittman. I've seen him come through Eureka and get on that stage to talk so that actually he'd have to hold onto the stand there, the podium, to keep from falling over.



Of course, they had the old rumor, too, that he died before election and they kept him on ice. That's one. of the political stories that they tell. I think that was the year he ran against Sam Platt, in 1940.

But I remember a rally quite well. In the old days; they used to stack wood, cord wood, in the middle of the street and they'd have maybe three piles, different ones, three or four. The band got out that night and then they poured the coal oil all around there and threw a match in there. Wonderful blaze. And then the band gathered around and they played a lot of patriotic numbers, and they went to the next pile of wood and they did the same, and the next.

Well, there was an old fellow up there. He was a miner. We used to call him Cap Pastore. The Republicans wanted to get a crowd out so they told Cap that they'd like to have him fire a few shots of dynamite to wake them up. Well, instead of going out of town to fire these dynamites, Cap went between the buildings. He built a little hole between my dad's place, my dad's rooming and boarding house, and the McElroy building, which is still standing up there—it's been changed a little bit. He put this powder in between. Of course, he said, "All I did was just put a quarter of a stick." Somebody evidently put a half a stick in each one. He got the people's attention all right, but he broke every window in my dad's place on the north side of the house. He broke every window there. Of course, that cost the Republicans something like forty or fifty dollars to replace those windows. (It wasn't like it is today. You'd get a window, cost you a dollar and a half for a window and the glazier would put it in for that price. But now, it's a dollar and a half for the .window and fifteen dollars for putting it in.) But he drew the crowds all right! There's no mistake about that. He got the crowd.

And they used to pack the theater. Invariably, they would talk by the hour. I'm telling you, that Sam Platt could talk, and Ben Curler. And then they had the silver-tongued orator, Sam Belford, for the Democrats, and Sardis Summerfield was for the Republicans. Of course, they always followed along and gave a summary of the candidates. I remember years ago one candidate said, "Well I can't talk too well, but I'll sing you a song." And he sang a song. He was running for surveyor general and he won. He sang pretty well.

In those days Eureka County was pretty much Republican. Then, of course, after 1932, after the Depression came along, '29, '30 and then we started changing over. In '32, it was terrific, it was all Democrats. And, I would say, that '34 was right at its peak and that's when I had my tough battle. In going over politics in the state, there were mighty few Republicans in office in '34 and '38; there was hardly any.

We went all through the lean years until 1946, when Molly Malone got elected at that time for United States Senate, defeated Berkeley Bunker. Then in the following years, in '52 Cliff Young was elected and in '50 Charlie Russell and myself ran and were elected. But they were lean years. Then after the eight years we served, they were pretty lean again as far as the Republicans were concerned.

Bob Raftice was an old, old friend of mine. I think the poor old fellow finally died in the county hospital. Kate Raftice, was his wife, lived in Carson City here, and ran a little store. Bob Raftice ran for state controller in 1906, Honest Bob Raftice, and he only lost by 475 votes. lit was terrifically close. He ran against Jake Eggers.

Judge Reynolds was the chairman of the Central Committee after Judge Eather went into the judgeship. Judge Reynolds was real active. And George Wingfield did what I thought a

splendid job as national committeeman, and was national committeeman for years and years. In fact, during the lean years, I think the George Wingfield was probably the only man who could afford to be the national committeeman; you know, to go back to New York and back East to attend the meetings of the Republican National Committee. Of course, they always said that the Republican party and the Democratic party was always in the First National Bank in Reno, George Wingfield. George Thatcher was a very prominent Democrat and George Wingfield was a Republican.

In 1926, when Wingfield backed Fred Balzar for governor against Jim Scrugham, not only myself, but I think the majority of the people throughout the state when Fred Balzar announced, just threw up their hands and said, "My goodness gracious, what does he think he is, running for governor against Jim Scrugham?" Jim was one of the best politicians in the state and he was well-known. Fred Balzar had been a conductor on a railroad and was state senator from Mineral County. But it was one of the best organized campaigns that I had ever seen. Every two or three weeks someone would be coming through our county, and, "Have you gone here? Have you gone there? Have you contacted this person? Have you gotten out these letters?" And you just had to be active. They insisted that you get moving. I remember real well in Eureka County at that time there was 444 votes in the county. Jim Scrugham received 111 and Fred Balzar got 333. That was a majority of 222 votes, which Fred appreciated, because at the time those returns got in he was just running about neck and neck and he was quite pleased, as he told me many times. "Those 222," he says, "I knew I was elected when I heard that." I think he went on to win by twelve

or fourteen hundred, maybe a little bit more. But that was about the most exciting governor's contest, I think, during the years, until later years when George Malone beat Berkeley Bunker for United States Senate. That was in '46.

Then, of course, when Charlie Russell ran in 1950, he had the backing of Senator McCarran, so he didn't have too much trouble then with the Republican party behind him and then with Senator McCarran also.

I would like to tell now of some of the unique jobs I did as Auditor and Recorder.

During the days of the Depression when they started the WPA, and perhaps being a good Republican, I insisted that we get some project that was worthwhile. I just wasn't in accord with making a project because it was a project to employ a certain number of people. So they allotted me three girls after I had told them what I wanted to do. I wanted to take all of the birth records and bring them up to date. When I say all of the birth records, the law for recording births went into effect, I think, on January 1, 1887. Prior to that time there was no birth records. The only birth records they had prior to that time was a newspaper copy. You see in a good many of the old, old newspapers, "Born to the wife of so-and-so, a son." Maybe the editor would have a note that this was good birth because a bottle of champagne was presented to the office staff of the newspaper, and so forth.

From 1887 to 1911, the birth records were definitely incomplete in every sense, because the birth certificate would read, "This is to certify that" (I'll cite my case), "that Mrs. B. Merialdo gave birth to a son on October 10, 1899 in the presence of Mrs. Margaret Taylor and others as witnesses." And it was signed Margaret Taylor. She was the midwife. Now there was nothing in that record to show whether I was the first child, the second, or

whether my name was Peter, John, Vincent, or whatever it may be.

So in future years, in order to satisfy the requirements of the government or social security, immigration visas and so forth, I would make a certified copy of that. Then if it were possible, I would get a certified copy of the baptismal record, tie the two together, and you'd have a perfect record because the baptismal record clarified the name, or rather gave the name which wasn't on the original record, and the date corresponded. Then you'd know if you were Peter or Vincent or whatever it may be.

I wasn't satisfied to just go back and check the records from 1887 to 1911. I had these girls go back to 1871. I got a book from old Jack Kennedy who was with Carlisle and Company and had been for years and years, and he sent me a loose-leaf book, indexed, and I lined it, and entered the name of the child and the name of the parents, the date of birth, and the issue of the Sentinel. These girls started that from 1871 Sentinels. Every birth that was noted, published in Eureka County. The Eureka Sentinel, for instance, had births in Virginia City, Pioche and all over the country. However, then we just picked out the Eureka births and we made up this record. Then we checked that record with the record from 1887. Now mind you, this went from 1871 to 1887. In fact, we went a little beyond it. Then we compared the records. If it was an official record from 1887 to 1911, we just disregarded it because we knew we had it; otherwise, we carried it on the books. And we might have some as late as 1892 or 3, that they had never recorded, so we put them in our little book.

Then I checked the old birth records from 1887 to 1911. I checked the indexes and I found that there was approximately eighty or ninety births that had never been indexed. So

naturally, in a recorder's office, a person would come in and say, "Could I have a copy of my birth record?!! You'd look it up and say, "I'm sorry." "Sorry, it's not here." So I went back and indexed, had the girls bring the index right up to date and index all of those that had been overlooked. And I even went further yet to the birth records from the county health officer, who, then was in charge of the bureau of vital statistics, and recorded the birth records. We had a lot of doctors up there that just stuck the birth certificate, glued it right into the page and forgot all about indexing it. So I went back, and I recall I found sixty-four of those that had never been indexed. So I went back and indexed all of those.

I'm very proud of the job. One of my old friends, Cecil Creel, came in. His first wife was born in Eureka, and she had told Cecil that she was born in the year later than she actually was, so she was a year older. And he had quite a time kidding her about it.

In later years I prepared many and many a certified copy, certified copies of these newspapers and I would just mention in the certificate, "This is to certify that the above is a complete copy of the birth as noted in the Eureka Daily Sentinel of July 14, 1876, an official newspaper of the state of Nevada, and in witness whereof.. ." Then I'd put my seal on it. Now tying that with the baptismal certificate served the purpose many times of getting a delayed birth certificate. In fact, they accepted that—the United States government—for travel visas or what you may have to. Well, that is one of the things I did during my years as Recorder and Auditor.

And there was another thing that I convinced the county commissioners. In the old days, the mining records—I thought it was very important for mining claims, the proof of labor on mining claims—were just



indexed under the name of the claim and not the name of the owner. People would write in or come in and ask me if so-and-so had filed their proof of labor. Unless you had a terrific memory and could remember them all, Eureka being a mining camp, it was doubly hard to remember; you just couldn't find it. So I convinced the county commissioners to give me another book and I cross-indexed it. I indexed every claim under the name of the claim and then under the name of the owner. And that way, cross-indexing, you came in and they wouldn't remember the name of the claim, they'd say, "Joe Smith (or somebody) owns this claim." I could just look under Smith and find them.

In the old days, the mortgagor or mortgagees in the mortgages were both recorded, but they were in two separate books. I brought that together. In fact, this is a strange thing to say, but when I first went to work in the Recorder's office, they still had one book—I believe it was chattel mortgages—that they still used pen and ink. And that's this late date of 1919 or 1920. So of course, I changed that after I went in, and we had all typewritten loose-leaf books. Of course, nowadays, everything is photostatic, I believe, in most recorder's offices, mostly microfilm.

I was just with Mr. Eather for three years, and after he went into the District Attorney's office, he approved of this indexing business. I presume practically every recorder's office in the state went through the same thing, but we were fortunate in Eureka to have newspaper files that went back to 1870-71, because we had never had a fire or anything to destroy those records.

I can recall real well in 1915 or '16, I recorded a mortgage of the Western Pacific. It was a tremendous thing. I think the fee for recording both as a chattel and as a real mortgage was \$235 or \$236. And, of course,

Judge Eather was then the Recorder and Auditor and I had taken typing in school and he asked me one summer if I wanted to do this work. I think I was paid the big sum of three dollars a day. I sat on a high stool with this sloping desk and I wrote with pen and ink from nine o'clock in the morning until five at night for two weeks on this one document. I'd only had one year of typing and the document had to be recorded then as a chattel. He did have a typewritten book, a loose-leaf book for that, so I used the typewriter. And to just show you the difference; just with one year's typing, I did it in less than ten days, and the other one took me over two weeks. And that's just the contrast how much faster typing is than writing by hand.

Getting back to Eureka politics and various close races we had. I don't remember this, but, I do remember when Bill Sweeney was sheriff. He sort of stuttered, and I never could see how he could be a sheriff, but nevertheless, he used to campaign through Cortez and Beowawe and that area and he carried a broken jug of whiskey. It used to be a whiskey jug and the bottom would be broken out. So he'd stop at the various places. I can remember him quite well and how he talked. "Well, we're gonna have a little drink." And he'd tell his driver (he had a team of horses, of course, in those days), "Go get the jug. I'll get it. I'll get it. Oh, goodness gracious. Gonna give you all a drink, but damn it, look at the bottom of this jug. I told you when we hit that bump that last time..." So he campaigned the county of Eureka several times. Of course all the old-timers remembered that, with the broken jug of whiskey. And he got elected many times. I think one time when there was one vote difference between Pete Hjul and Bill Sweeney. That was before my time, but I remember when Bill Sweeney was sheriff later on. I remember him quite well.

I also remember when he was sheriff, a couple of Indians had broken out of jail, sawed the bars. And we all thought that it was just impossible for anyone ever to get out of that jail. But they sawed through the bars and they got out. Whether they caught them, I don't remember.

Did the livestock and railroad interests hamper Nevada growth? I would like to comment from the point of view of a small-county official.

At one time there was a survey made, in the days of '30 or '31. In every county wherein the railroad ran through, they paid their taxes under protest. In order to prove that they were over-assessed, they sent a man out around the state. I knew him; he was well-known here in Carson City. He was Phil Gibson. Phil went throughout the counties—shall we call them the railroad counties—and he made counts of the cattle. He searched the records and he searched everything he could pertaining to the number of cattle that were sold. And he came up with a figure that approximately only twenty percent of the cattle in the state were being taxed, and only about twenty-three or twenty-four percent of the valuation of the cattle.

Charles Cantwell was appointed to represent the various counties with the various district attorneys. When they were confronted with this report from Phil Gilson as to the assessment of the various ranches, of course, they immediately compromised with the railroads. But it was definitely certain, way back in the twenties, that the ranches and the railroads that paid the majority of the taxes, naturally ran the government, too. They elected their own people into the legislature.

The mining industry at that time was mostly company owned. Ely employed any number of men. There was a little activity in these smaller counties, but no great number

of employees were employed. The taxes were paid in the twenties on two equal installments. Then in the thirties when things got tough, the ranchers and farmers came down en masse to the legislature, and they demanded that the legislature change that to make it so that they could pay their taxes in four equal installments. That's when that went into effect. That was the Depression at that time.

In the smaller counties, not all of the smaller counties, but in Eureka and Lander and Elko and Pershing and Humboldt, the assessment of the railroads had a tremendous effect on the tax roll for the counties. For instance, in Eureka County, I would say that the railroads and the public utilities probably comprised about fifty or sixty percent to seventy percent of the total assessment roll. And it had its effects in Elko, Humboldt, and Pershing. You go back to those years and you will find that tax rate, the general county tax rate in those counties—I think Elko and Pershing County was probably the lowest in the state. The counties that really suffered are the counties that didn't have a railroad, particularly like Nye County and Esmeralda County. Of course, Mineral had some railroad in there, but those are the counties that suffered in the days when the railroads, I will say paid the burden of taxes, particularly during the Depression years.

The protest of taxes worried every one of the counties, because a great many of them couldn't function without that railroad tax. It was just the Western and Southern Pacific. The Pullman car lines probably were the greatest taxpayers other than the railroads in the line of public utilities. I don't believe that they protested at that time.

I don't ever recall any bribery or threats against the county assessors. In fact, one of the assessors who was defeated years ago in Eureka was Harry C. McTerney, who was later

the tax agent for the Southern Pacific Railroad. He always came into Eureka. I don't think there was any of that sort of pressure whatsoever. I think most people are under the wrong impression that the assessment of railroads was made by the assessor, which is entirely wrong. The assessment of railroads and public utilities was always made in my time by the Tax Commission. And it was always based on the mileage, the number of miles that ran in your particular county. So putting pressure onto the assessor would have done them no good whatsoever. Now whether they put pressure onto the members of the Public Service Commission, that I don't know because I was never around.

I don't recall the year that we started the Fiscal Officers Association. The county officials throughout the state got together and said we should. We met in Reno, upstairs in the State Building. I think Emile Gezelin was there, although he wasn't a fiscal officer. Jack Cunningham and Gene Duarte and Grace Bell, Bertha Manhire Cline, Delle Boyd, and I think Henry Anderson and D. O. Fryberger from Pershing County came in. That was most of the group, I believe, when we started the Fiscal Officers Association, and that was back in the early forties, I believe. And then, of course, it included all the recorders and auditors and the clerks and treasurers and the State Auditor and so forth in the state. The assessors had their own organization at the time and the county commissioners had their own organization, so we thought that we'd have ours. And I'm happy to say that they did a lot of good work, particularly on this retirement bill. They worked real hard. And I think they had quite a hand in seeing that the legislature put that retirement bill over. I think we got it over in the '49 session. I think I was probably one of the vice-presidents at that time.

I was a charter member of the American Legion when they started that in 1919 or '20. I've paid my dues every year. I'm also a charter member of the Lion's Club in Eureka, and, of course, I have transferred to Carson City.

I am an honorary life member and hold the No. 1 card in the Elks Club as an honorary life member, given to me for work that I had done. That was given to me in 1945 and I'm quite proud of it, because I think the Elks are good; we used to have marvelous times. The Elks would come over to Eureka. When I was up there, they'd come over to Eureka at least once a year. We had initiation in Eureka and we had the big dance. We just had a wonderful time. Of course, we used to go to lodge in Ely quite often. Had to drive sometimes through a snowstorm to get up there, eighty miles.



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## NEVADA STATE POLITICS AND POLITICIANS, 1950-1966

My first state campaign was terrific. My brother Vincent and my family asked me if I were crazy to run for state office, coming from one of the smallest counties in the state and being a Republican besides. At that time (in 1950), the state was almost two to one Democratic. I went down to Las Vegas to see my brother and he said, "You must be nuts." I said, "I guess I am." "But," I said, "all I'm asking you to do is just take care of Las Vegas for me." Of course, that was quite a chore in itself. Yeah, but," he says, "what about the rest?" I said, "You take care of Las Vegas and I'll take care of the rest of the state. I'm not worried. I'm not known down here in Las Vegas, but I've got a pretty good nucleus of supporters." I said, "That courthouse over there are practically all my supporters." I said, "I have a tremendous lot of insurance agents and a lot of good real estate men." And I said, "If you'll just get out, I'll come down here as often as I can, and we'll coordinate this thing together." Well, what happened was that I carried Las Vegas, the first Republican that ever carried Las Vegas, but nothing like Laxalt

did, I'll promise you that. I think I carried it by six or eight hundred votes, and he carried it by ten thousand.

(It doesn't speak too well of me now. Here this man that was in there defeated me by 6,000 votes and Wilson McGowan comes along and defeats him by 17,000, which is something in Nevada politics that I think, if you searched the history of Nevada politics, you will never find where a Democrat, a man running on the Democratic ticket, was ever defeated by 17,000 votes. Of course, back forty years we only had about 20-30,000 votes. But never have I known of a defeat of that kind. I can't explain it and I don't think you can, either.)

I ran at the same time, and I had practically the same backing that Governor Russell had. I had Max Fleischmann and Norman Biltz. I think I was one of the only candidates that ever ran for state office in 1950 or at any time that had the most prominent Democrats, Senator McCarran and Ted Carville, both in my camp. And that, I think, you'll find is very unusual for a Republican to have two leading

Democrats. Senator McCarran was really out for me and Senator Carville took a couple of trips around the state for me.

Jerry Donovan {my opponent} didn't do anything to Ted Carville. It was personal friendship with Ted. He was friendly with Governor Carville, but Ted and I had known one another way back in 1915 and '16. Ted knew that I had always supported him and went out and worked for him and he just thought it was a good chance to pay me back. But with Senator McCarran, Jerry Donovan had made the statement when he was tight one night that this was one time he'd "beat that old white-haired so-and-so. He thinks he's the king and this is the time." And you didn't make statements about Senator McCarran around in public in those days but what it got back to Senator McCarran. He openly told the Democrats—I know of several occasions—that he would like very much to see me into that job and he couldn't support this other man and he was just no good. I always had a very high regard for Senator McCarran regardless of that, because I liked his actions in Congress. I liked his stand on packing the Supreme Court, when he just got out of a sickbed to tell Franklin D. And I liked his fighting when one time that Franklin D. wasn't going to let him get on the train at Carlin, but Senator McCarran got on the train. I don't think the President was too happy at that time, but McCarran was on there nevertheless.

I have a letter at home where Senator McCarran wrote me and said that he thought he was a pretty fair orator in his day and so forth. But, he said, "I am enclosing a copy of General MacArthur's speech before Congress of the United States." And he said, "Pete, I have never heard anything as eloquent as that in my life, and not only eloquent, it was a marvelous talk from beginning to end."

Then with Governor Carville (this would be interesting to most people), he and I were very close friends. Even after, he very seldom came to Carson that he came up to our house for lunch and so forth. It was a personal matter.

I will tell a little more about the campaign in 1950. About my own particular case, when we were in Winnemucca, the Fiscal Officers were meeting there. I think it was Joe Germain, the Recorder and Auditor, in my case said, "Here we're going to have to have a fellow run for governor." And I just understood him to say someone running for state office. So the following year when I was down in Pioche—this was in the fall of '49, I think, we had our meeting in November or December—and I told a few of them around there that I thought perhaps I might run for State Controller. And somehow or other, Jack Cunningham got ahold of it and before we adjourned our meeting he said, "I think we ought to hear from one of our members here who has ambitions and wants to be our State Controller." So I actually had to get up and tell them my plans. I told them that I knew very well that I couldn't expect their endorsement, which wouldn't be fair, because there might be others in the group that might want to do it. I said, "I would appreciate your blessings anyway, if you'll give them to me." Of course, I knew very well that I had that.

So then I contacted my brother Vincent in Las Vegas and he came out with the statement, he said, "You must be crazy." And I said, "Well, perhaps I am." And he said, "Do you know that this is 1950. We haven't elected a Republican governor since 1930, the second time Fred Balzar ran. And we haven't elected a State Controller." He said, "You must be out of your mind." And I said, "Well, there's only one thing I'm asking you, of you. You take care of Clark County, and I'll take care of the



rest of the state.” Well he finally consented. So then I got together and I announced myself in May, in Reno. I did take advantage of the fact that we went to a central committee meeting. I remember Jack Ross was there, and Ken Johnson was there, and the old line of Republicans that was throughout the state. There was no one that would announce themselves for any office at that time. I think this was in May of 1950, early in May. I was sitting in the corner and it just dawned on me, “This is a terrific time to announce. I can get just a lot of free publicity that no one is going to get because the papers are going to come out and say they had their meeting and no one announced other than Peter Merialdo, Recorder and Auditor in Eureka.” And I did announce. I got up and told them. I said, “I’m just hoping that I won’t get any primary opposition,” and I said that I’d like to run for State Controller. And, of course, they were all pleased. The papers did it for every political column then for about four or five or six weeks. They just said, “The only known candidate that the Republicans have is Peter Merialdo.”

So then I think I talked with Charlie Russell one day, and Governor Russell told me that he thought that he would file for governor. So then the committee got busy and thought, “Well, if we could be governor and state controller...” We had Sam Houghton file for surveyor-general and the attorney from Reno, Mr. Stewart, filed for attorney general.

George Marshall ran for Senator that year in the general against McCarran, and Burr Mackenzie ran for Congress. Burr had a very good chance of winning it and he blew it on taking sides with the Indians, I believe, against the water-users on the Truckee river. I thought sure Burr would win until that time, and then he just blew it. He would have won, too; I surely believe that.

But the campaign was, I would say, an exceptionally clean campaign. There was no—Charlie Russell was just that type that wouldn’t stand for any—foolishness. On his part, I know that all of his speeches were just right along the line of just good government and economy in government, which he practiced when he was governor. And all the other boys traveled as a caravan part way, and then we were on our own for quite a ways.

It was difficult in a place like Clark County to campaign, and I think all of the boys found that out. You’d go down there and you’d try to meet these people that were coming home from work. I remember I was out there myself in North Las Vegas in a bar, and this fellow that owned the bar was a very good friend of mine. He used to live in Pioche. I bought a drink, and it seemed like there was a lot of women in there, that were waiting for their husbands to come from work. And so I bought a drink. Of course, it was October—it was still warm down there. They were having a beer. So when I bought the drink, Gus Messerlow said, “You’re now drinking with, I hope, our next state controller.” He says, “I’ve know this man a long time and he’s a pretty good man. Blah, blah, blah, etc.” So what surprised me was that so many women came up to me and said, “We’d like to vote for you, but we can’t.” “Oh,” I said, “You can’t?” “No.” And I said, “Well, tell me why you can’t vote for me.” “Well, you’re Republican and we’re all registered as Democrats.” I was really surprised and I said, “Well, don’t you know that in the general election you can vote for whomever you please? You don’t have to vote for your ticket.” “Oh, is that right? That isn’t what they told us.” And I said, “You must have been talking to the Democratic central committee or something.” They said, “That’s right, that’s right.” So I found out later that that’s exactly what they had told them. They

got these people to register and said, "Now you're registered as a Democrat, and you're going to have to vote as a Democrat." And he'd convinced a lot of them. I had quite a time.

I had some pretty good friends over in Westside. As you know, Westside is where Paul Laxalt got—when he ran against Senator Cannon—he got one, and some places he got none. I think I did a little bit better than that! I got a few, seventy-five or eighty or a hundred out of some of those precincts. However, there wasn't near as many colored people at that time as there is now.

We had the same difficulties in Clark County in the Westside, which is controlled definitely by labor. I don't think Charlie Russell got too many votes. I did carry Clark County which was unusual for a Republican at that time and I had a terrific organization. I had all the insurance boys, who were very unhappy, for me. I had all the real estate boys who were also very unhappy, plus all the Republicans and so forth that were really working. Having a foreign name, it was hard for me to put over the name Merialdo, so we just came up with the idea that maybe we could sing it. So we sang the name over the radio on the spots every hour or every half hour or so. It had its effects.

The second time I ran it was very, very quiet. And the third time, I don't say I went to sleep, but I just got drugged down in Clark County by 7,000 votes, although I only lost the state by 6,000 and something.

At that time the Young Turks as they called it, were trying to revitalize the Republican party. In 1950, when I ran they were very, very much in evidence. In fact, Les Gray, Fran Breen, and Roger Teglia were with them. I think one of the most successful radio advertisements we ever had was a question and answer deal in Reno sometime in October of '50, and each one of us had a moderator.

I remember my moderator was Fran Breen. He was quite happy about it, and so was I, because at that time they had never had that type of radio. Of course, radio covered the whole Reno area and several of the outlying areas. Cliff Young was one of the Young Turks. Les and Aleta Gray did a marvelous job at that time. They just wouldn't take no for an answer. They just insisted—and they did a splendid job.

There was no particular instance other than their rallies that they had. They just took over, and, as I say, in this one radio meeting and all of the rallies, they just took over and seemed to throw a lot of enthusiasm. They really reactivated the Republican party in Reno. It had its effects throughout the rest of the state, for instance, with Noble Getchell.

Noble Getchell and I were very, very good friends. When I first met Noble Getchell, he was in charge of the Betty O'Neal. That was back in '25, '26, and '27. He was really active at that time in community affairs and he was elected as state senator from Lander County year after year after year. He supported a baseball team at Betty O'Neal, and he gave Lander County a lot of publicity. I know that we used to go to Betty O'Neal. We were playing ball, and we'd all go out to Betty O'Neal for lunch. Noble Getchell did a lot of wonderful work for University students. He helped a lot of those boys through school.

And I think that his baseball team in 1926 was made almost entirely of University of Nevada boys, Verdi Bream and Johnny Argrussa and the two Lawlor boys, Jake and Mike, and, of course, Lefty Stanton (I don't know if Lefty went to the University of Nevada or not). The majority of them were from the University of Nevada and he put them to work out there so they could play ball. He had a championship team, too. He just picked the best of them.



My brother Vincent and Noble Getchell were real close friends. I used to come down to Carson quite often (I was living in Eureka at that time), when the senate was in session. Any kind of a bill that I wanted, I always talked to Senator Getchell and he was very, very nice about everything and he was quite cooperative in anything that I ever asked him. Maybe it just happened to hit him right.

Then in later years, I used to stop in and see Mr. Getchell. He had an office in the First National Bank building, and then he used to eat lunch every day in the Grand Cafe with the man that's head of the Triple A, Gene Shoup and George Wingfield. Several times I sat down with them and had lunch with them. However, most of the time I ate with Sam Armanko. He was my step-father, we called him, because he insisted that every time I ever went into his store I'd always have to have lunch with him, even if it was before noon. That went on for years and years and years.

I think Noble Getchell was a good senator. I think he was a good, honest man. I think, of course, it's just like politics would get today if you just let one group continually handle it, they grow older and older, for years and years. I can't really blame that too much on the Republicans. They went through an era of hard times, and no one had any money outside of maybe Getchell or Wingfield or maybe some of those boys there. And you take what we call the "lean years" after Fred Balzar died, Morley Griswold ran against Dick Kirman. (Kirman served one term and then he said, "I refuse to run.") That was in 1934. So from '34 until 1950, Nevada hardly ever knew a Republican governor or a county official. I think the only man we had in there for a few years after that was Andy Stinson, who was the State Mine Inspector. And then, I believe, Matt Murphy finally beat him. Goodness, gracious, the Republican party... I attended

most of the state central committee meeting and so forth, and we'd just have a handful, hardly any at all. Then in the forties, it picked up along about '46 when Molly was elected. Cliff Young defeated Walter Baring in '52, and then from there to '58 it went back to almost all Democrat.

I don't think it was so much in getting rid of anyone in particular. Les and Aleta just wanted to revitalize the party. They wanted to put a little life into the party, get some younger people in it. I think that they were absolutely right in doing what they did.

I'm an old-timer. Maybe I resent something like that, but I don't want to get to be an old-timer where I believe in getting into a rut and not doing anything. I try to stay active. 1962, I went out for Paul Laxalt around the state and then again in '64, I went out, and in '66, I went out again. I hope that I'm around here so that I can go out again in '68, if it has to be.

Although he was active in 1950, I did not know Max Fleischmann. I knew Norman Biltz quite well. In fact, I knew Norman Biltz before I ran for office. When he had an office where the Club Cal-Neva is now, I went in there and tried to sell him the Eureka Livestock Company. Norman was quite active in 1950. He gave me a little financial assistance. And I know that he gave me the support of Johnny Mueller. Of course, I had known Johnny Mueller way back in 1920-22. I think Johnny Mueller was one of the first Congressional Medal winners from World War I. That's where I got to know him, he was so active in American Legion. They were pretty active for awhile. I think they probably worked pretty well right in with Les and Aleta Gray. They were very active in Governor Russell's campaign.

Do I know why Governor Russell and Norman Biltz split up? I think so. I think that Norman probably got too demanding in some

of his requests, or something like that. He had a boy over there in the office that was Norman Biltz's right hand. There wasn't a thing that went on in the state government that Norman Biltz didn't know it that quick. That was Ralph Thomas who was Governor Russell's secretary at the time. Then later when Thomas announced for Congress, Charlie Russell told him that he couldn't stay on any longer if he announced for Congress. So Russell let Thomas go and he went to work for Norman Biltz in the Partners Insurance Corporation until just a few years ago. Then he left, and I think he's down in Walnut Creek now.

I knew Johnny Mueller. Johnny always had a high regard for the people from the smaller counties. He always liked it, if he could do something for one of them. I know the first year I ran, he was very, very active. He used to josh with me a lot of times and he'd say, "How many votes are you going to get in Eureka County?" That's when I was still Recorder and Auditor. Of course, I'd tell him, "I'm going to get 297." And he'd put it down and told everybody that those guys up in those counties, they don't go by tens or twenties, they go by one and two, and so forth. I used to contact him quite often when he was a lobbyist. He was a lobbyist for many and many years in the legislature. We had lunch several times together, and he used to always come down to the office and see me when I was State Controller. I liked Johnny real well. I think he was a pretty shrewd boy, too. He wasn't letting any grass grow under his feet as far as that goes, when it came to small business deals.

Would I compare him with Black Wallace? Shall we call him a modern Black Wallace? Yes, I would say that it was something on that order; he and Biltz. However, they never had the control of Wallace, I don't believe. But in this day and age, it's pretty hard to control like

the old boys did in the old times. They used a little pressure.

I saw it used in this last election—this pressure. Well, you saw it in the article that Ike Cochran put in the paper, for instance, about if he didn't buy these six tickets to the Democratic dinner, that he'd know the reason why. And he found out the reason why. The next day the governor and Dick Ham took all of their prescriptions out of his office. It ended up that Ike wrote about a couple hundred letters to all the druggists in the state of Nevada. He's very, very popular in the shrine; he's a past Potentate of the Kerak Temple. I guess he let all the boys there know it, too. I talked to Ike and he was really, really put out. Ike's a fine little fellow and he doesn't play the game that way. He's a businessman and he doesn't like pressure put on him. That is just one illustration. You can go on and on and on.

Did Johnny Mueller ever ask me for any favors? I think he asked me once or twice on some legislative deal that he had and I said, "I don't think that's necessary, Johnny, because I think the boys from Eureka County already feel that way." So there isn't really anything that I did for him. He asked me, yes, a couple of occasions, but I don't think there was any need for it. Because the things that he asked me, these boys were already lined up in that way.

When I went into the State Controller's office, the insurance department and the real estate department were really a mess. Of course, his deputies said that it was Jerry's fault. Jerry didn't give a hoot, I guess. I think, that when I brought Paul Hammel up there to work in the commissioner's office, I think the collections, if I remember correctly, were less than a hundred thousand dollars. Now they're two and a half million. And the insurance; we found so many companies that were doing business and they were unlicensed, and so

forth. And the real estate board only had two meetings a year. After I got in, of course, we had our board and we'd have to hold a meeting every couple of months, particularly in Clark County; it was building up fast. We got a lot of protests from Clark County that there was a lot of brokers and so forth moving in, and we eventually had to get an inspector down there and check them out. We got a little stricter with our examinations, too.

I think when I left after eight years, I had finally convinced the legislature that they should have a separate division of real estate. When I came in as State Controller, he was the insurance commissioner and president of the real estate commission, member of the highway board, state board of control, and state board of finance. So I asked the governor one day, I said, "When do I put in any time as State Controller? So he helped me a lot in getting this through. I only acted as insurance commissioner for about three or four months. I think it was on April 1, 1951, Paul Hammel took over. That is, they set up the separate department and Governor Russell then appointed him as the insurance commissioner. I met with a little criticism at that time, because Paul was a Democrat and had run for lieutenant governor. Nevertheless, he was the man that was endorsed by the industry in Clark County and in Reno and I am not a bit sorry that I did it. He turned out to be a very, very high-class man.

The 1952 Presidential election, I think pertaining to Nevada, was mostly fought in the convention. We had so many of them that wanted us to go back there to the convention. (I was a delegate to the 1956 convention in San Francisco, I remember quite well.) There was some of the Clark County boys wanted to go all out for Bob Taft. And, in fact, my very, very good friend Paul McDermott was leading the Taft forces, and he and I got into some good

arguments. I had to go along with Paul in this respect, that I thought probably Bob Taft was about as fine a candidate as we could get. But my contention was we could never elect him, that at that time we hadn't gotten over that New Deal too long from Roosevelt, and so forth. I just thought that to swing clear over to Bob Taft would be too much of a sweep. So it turned out, I believe, that most of the people felt the same way. However, we didn't have too much trouble in the election after Eisenhower got the nomination, but I think, shall we say, the people were getting tired of the New Deal. The candidate against Ike was Adlai Stevenson. I think he was a colorless candidate, and entirely too much with the New Deal, and the policies that they had.

In campaigning through the state, we didn't have too much trouble, because I think Ike carried most of the counties, almost, and if he didn't carry Clark County, he got a big vote down there. It was one of the easiest I think, of all presidential elections that I ever saw from the Republican party that I recall. It was just so easy.

Of course, I lived through the years when Franklin D. ran four times. It was just impossible. We worked our heads off and we did everything. I lost money. I remember making bets. A bunch of us got together and they bet us two to one and we put up five hundred dollars, five of us, and we went over to Ely. Then we did the same thing when Truman ran against Dewey. We thought we had a cinch at that time. Of course, I still think we would have had a cinch if Dewey had gone home and gone to bed or something about a week before, or two weeks before election.

The Eisenhower and Stevenson campaign, the second, wasn't much harder. It was just a matter of getting the people out to vote. I personally don't feel that Eisenhower was the best President we ever had either, by

a long ways. I always did think that Dick Nixon would have been a lot better President, particularly than this man we have now, LBJ.

I did find out this about campaigning through the state in 1966. I had no fear at all when I opened up to talk to someone I thought was on the fence for Paul. I mentioned LBJ, and I got a quick response that he wanted nothing to do with LBJ. I found out that the man was just about as unpopular in the state of Nevada as Earl Warren. A lot of them would shoot that back at you and say, "Earl Warren is a Republican." And I'd say, "Yes, he used to be a Republican, but he's not anymore; he's just a plain pinko."

At the 1956 San Francisco convention, the delegation was not split. Just one or two of them split. It was just a convention that we'd say it was all cut and dried. It was just a matter of casting the ballots. There was no real fights or anything like that, nothing at all. I was a little bit disappointed. I was really thrilled with Tom Dewey's speech there, and a little bit disappointed in his height. I thought he was a taller man. He's a little short fellow. Probably then he had elevator heels on. He's a marvelous talker. I think he was the outstanding speaker they had. They had many speakers. I enjoyed the music of Nat "King" Cole very much. But it was a very, very quiet convention in manner as conventions go. I've seen pictures of them. That is the only national convention that I took part in as a delegate.

In 1954, I ran against Herbert "Tex" Covington, who was a railroader. I defeated him by a little bit more than I defeated Jerry Donovan. Tex was a good man, but as Senator McCarran came in one day and said to me, "You know, this Tex Covington," (he was one of McCarran's boys) he says, "You know this Tex Covington's a good man." And I said, "Yes sir, Pat, he is a good man, a damn' good man right where he's at." His son, Dr. Samuel

McCarran, was with him at the time, and he said, "You see that?" He says, "What are you going to do?" He says, "I guess we'll still have to support Pete." So I had no qualms about Senator McCarran, even though Tex was... they used to call him one of his hatchetmen that would go around.

By 1954, I had made enough contacts in the office and I had a pretty good group of people throughout the state that knew who I was, a lot of Democrats. As you know, a Republican had to get several thousand, twenty-five or thirty thousand Democrats, or you just couldn't get elected.

Charlie had a hard time that second time, I mean Governor Russell. It looked like for a while that he was just going to go down to defeat until they pulled the cat out of the bag down there in Las Vegas. And they exploded that tape recording that Hank Greenspun pulled off in Clark County. However, as a candidate at that time, I was quite worried that voters were against Charlie up until about three weeks before election. And the tide swung then in Charlie's favor.

It was just something similar in the race for State Controller in the 1966 election. I think two weeks before election that the poll in Clark County showed that Keith Lee was leading Wilson McGowan. But McGowan exploded down there with both newspapers for him, and he got on t.v., and so forth. He found out that the majority of the people down there never heard of Keith Lee. They never heard of McGowan, so he just took advantage of that fact. It's never been known in politics in the state of Nevada that a Republican candidate can carry Clark County by ten thousand votes or defeat an incumbent Democrat by seventeen thousand. Goodness gracious! I was quite proud when I defeated Jerry Donovan, the incumbent, by six thousand something, but., my goodness,

seventeen thousand! I asked McGowan, I said, "I wish I were a little bit younger. I'd like to get a page out of your book." But I wasn't down in Clark County in 1966, so I couldn't really comment on what went on down there.

When I was campaigning this last fall (1966) for Paul, and when we went all through the state, I hardly heard the state controller's race mentioned until I'd meet some of the old-timers that knew me. And they would be at our coffee and doughnut hour that we had in Goldfield and Beatty and various parts of the state. They would bring up the subject that they were Democrats. And I would say, "Why, how come you're here?" "Well, we're going to vote for Laxalt and we're going to vote for McGowan. We're sick and tired of this administration and this Keith Lee, in plain words, running the department. We don't want it. We don't like it." And definitely again, I substantiate that statement with the result of the last election. There's never been in the history of Nevada politics that any Republican—I don't care, I say any Republican—ever carried Clark County by ten thousand votes. And Lee has a couple a hundred relatives down there, so it must have been his own relatives going against him to get defeated. But imagine that, with the vote four to one, three to one anyway, in Clark County against the Republicans and Lee to be beaten there by ten thousand votes. And it reflected definitely on the governor's race. The Nevada state highway department definitely didn't help Grant Sawyer a bit, at which I was surprised. That blue ribbon committee, which was appointed at the request of Governor Sawyer, and he named them all, their report didn't do Grant Sawyer a bit of good. It exposed a lot of things that were going on. And I think that that is one of the big things that helped Paul get elected, and I know definitely it's one of the things that defeated

Keith Lee. Harvey Dickerson himself, told me the other day that if he'd had anyone against him that campaigned real hard, he'd have gone down the drain along with the rest of them.

In the 1958 election, one of the so-called issues was Keith Lee's accusation that there were weaknesses in our operation of the Highway Board. Definitely, I could never explain anything relative to a weakness. Our board, at that time when we first went in, was composed of Governor Russell and Bill Mathews, who was the attorney general, and myself. There definitely was no weakness in the board, in any individual member. We met once a month and sometimes two and three times a month, which was quite a contrast to what this past board used to meet; once in 1965, once.

Perhaps Mr. Lee made that statement from the fact that he took over the highway department, as Harvey Dickerson told me. And certainly in all fairness, I wouldn't want to run a highway department the way he did, for the simple reason that the vote shows that the people never thought he did a very good job at running it. It was just crowded with favoritism. Well, I don't care to mention a lot of things that happened; they knew very well that Mr. Lee was the instigator of all of it—the contracts that were let that were questionable. (There was that investigation; we had a blue ribbon committee, and it goes without saying what had happened.)

Now there was no weakness on my part, definitely. I know that once in awhile Governor Russell used to become a little bit irked at, for instance, one time we had a contract over there. The low bidder happened to be a firm that had beaten a good many of the merchants and so forth in the southern part of the state, and left and didn't pay their bills. I would not vote for giving them the contract, even though they were the low bidder, for the simple reason



that I didn't think anyone was entitled to a bid that would go into any small town or county and beat the merchants and water works and so forth, out of their money. So I voted against it and Governor Russell had to step down and vote. He made the motion that they grant the contract to these people and Bill Mathews seconded it. I made the statement, which is of record, that I want the record to show that I voted to show that I voted no, and it was the same way. We got along well.

If you call a weakness not sticking their noses into affairs that didn't pertain to use, like the personnel department, we took care of that in good shape as the regular increase in salaries and so forth. But we certainly didn't make it a partisan deal in any way, shape, or form. We didn't try to raise particular friends. It was up to our state highway engineer, who was Huston Mills, that ran the highway department. And I think you can readily see that it was run much better than it was during Mr. Lee's administration.

If you will trace back in Nevada politics, you'll find out that the highway department was the cause of a good many state controllers and governors being defeated in the state of Nevada. And it was the cause of my downfall, and I think I know where we made the big mistake, Mr. Lee said, our weakness. This is where we made the mistake, just the opposite of weakness. We took a stand on that Third Street freeway in Reno, and you know for yourself what happened there. What happened was that they organized against the Third Street, and naturally the organization spent a lot of money to defeat Charlie Russell and to defeat me. I lost Washoe County the last time I ran by a hundred votes or something like that, which ordinarily I should carry by three or four thousand. Had I carried it four thousand votes, I would have defeated Keith Lee even though he beat me

sixty-five hundred votes. And I think it had its hand in defeating Jerry Donovan; that is the man that I defeated. I think it partially helped to defeat Henry Schmidt. Naturally, if you want to go over there and say nothing, do nothing, it'll still reflect on you because you're a member of the board and you have to do something. We met regularly. I don't think there was ever a contract issued that there wasn't a regular meeting. Maybe once or twice, I was the only member there. Bill Mathews was sick, or Harvey Dickerson was out of town, and the governor was out. But one member was always present, and most of the time we had a full quorum of the three members that issued the contract. Now that's quite a contrast to 1965. I can't understand it. I can't understand how they approve the contracts with just one member present. Not only that but one meeting in 1965, and just a few in 1966.

The highway department is one of the biggest departments in the state of Nevada. They're scattered throughout the state. And today, I still have more friends in the highway department around the state of Nevada, than I made in any other way.

But I was really surprised that Keith Lee said that it was my attitude in the highway department. In fact, I took more interest in the highway department than Charlie Russell did, because he had so many other duties to perform. And Bill Mathews and Harvey Dickerson never were too interested in the highway. But it is quite a problem now. The Nevada state highway department had done a good job, I think, in building roads. I think that we have some of the best roads in the United States. I know that our secondary roads are far superior to California, because our secondary roads are built on the same standard as our primary and interstate. However, they're not as wide.

But they do entirely different in California. That money is appropriated to the various counties and they build their own roads. And you'll see, oh, so many roads and that are not even graded. The oil is just spread on there and it's not graded. Instead of putting in culverts, they'll have a sway and let the water run over it. I don't think you can compare the California secondaries. Now their primaries, naturally they get the federal funds the same as we do. Of course, there are parts of the state of Nevada, are yet, ninety-two and ninety-three percent federal funds. If it hadn't been for that, we'd have an awful time building those roads through those deserts.

I think state government at the time before Charlie went in was lagging in various departments. I think it was lagging in the governor's department, and I know definitely in the State Controller's department. It wasn't in the state treasurer's office, because Dan Franks had always done a good job. The secretary of state and also the mine inspector had done a good job, too. Those two offices, the governor and Controller really needed a change. I suppose that's one reason why we got elected.

Rex Bell came in as lieutenant governor after the 1954 election. I don't think any of the Republicans were a bit worried about that, although Sailor Ryan was a good man; I like him. He was a very nice fellow, but he was a very, very prominent labor leader. He was known throughout the state, there's no question about that. Sailor Ryan was known, but he was known in the labor circles and he was, well, shall I say, many of the business people were very antagonistic toward him. I think the right-to-work bill acted against him, I definitely think it did. You know how the right-to-work repeal went down to defeat two or three different times in the state of Nevada.

Rex was such a lovable character and good-looking. He wasn't the finest speaker in the world, but he had that personality-plus that most of the women, I'd say, couldn't resist. The men all liked him; he was a man, too, among men. But he had a terrific following among the women, just all over the state. Every place we went, I think most of them came out to our rallies to see Rex Bell. I think he would have been a good governor if anything had happened to Governor Russell. I think had Charlie Russell decided not to run that third term and Rex would have run, he would have won. But, of course, he never lived long enough. Of course, that was a big upset, a big calamity for the Republican party because he was practically the No. 1 boy, that is, his votes. He was a vote-getter. You would have to compare him a lot with Ronald Reagan in California. I talked up in Elko with one of the actors that's up there that has a ranch. He reminded me so much of Rex Bell. He gave us a little talk in our noonday meeting. He said, "Just don't undersell Ronald Reagan. He's just not a plain actor. He's got a lot of gray matter." Which he did.

I knew Molly Malone years and years before he ever went to Congress. I knew him when he was state engineer. Molly was always the aggressive type. He was always a fighter. In fact, he was an intercollegiate champion, I think, of the Pacific Coast, while at the University of Nevada. Only one drawback that I could see about Molly was, he talked too much. A lot of people were quite put out when he'd get on a stand and he'd talk for hours and hours. They just didn't like that. But other than that, Molly was a very good campaigner and he was hard working, very hard working campaigner. And I've seen him in the rodeos, get on a horse and stay in that arena all afternoon. The main thing in Molly was his determination. He just insisted that he

was going to get elected to something. Every time he came through Eureka I said, "Now what in the Sam Hill are you running for?" He ran three or four times before he was elected. I felt sorry for Molly after he was defeated and ran for Congress, and I coaxed and begged him not to. I had a little office upstairs in the Sweetland Building, and I said, "You just don't come back like that, Molly." I think he was a good state engineer. I think the records will show that. I've talked to Mr. Dondero who worked with him, and he thought the world of Molly and thought that he had done a marvelous job as state engineer.

Molly had ambition when he was young. He was good-looking. He was a graduate of the University of Nevada. But once in awhile, I guess, he got too much to drink, he got a little bit out of line or maybe a little bit belligerent. The only trouble was, he talked too much. And then, also, Molly bluffed a little too much. He'd go up to a man and say, "How you doing? Gee, I haven't seen you for a long time." And these fellows would say to me, "He doesn't know me. He doesn't have the faintest idea." Which was true. And, of course, you just can't do that in politics, because you're going to get called. A lot of people think they can get by with it, but you don't anymore. Now I've seen a lot of politicians that even in this day and age, think that they're getting by walking up to a person. I always tried when I was in politics, because there's no man that can leave his office once every four years and go around the state and call everybody by their first name.

For instance, when I went to Winnemucca, I would get Joe Germain who was the recorder and auditor there. Of course, he was a past master in politics. He'd been in the game. Up in Winnemucca, we'd walk down the street together and he'd see a man coming and he'd say, "Pete, you know this fellow." And he'd whisper to me, "This is Jim so-and-so." It's

surprising the difference that that would make when you could walk up to him and say, "How are you, Jim?" or "How are you Mr. Smith (or Mr. Brown)" "Do you remember me?" Well, of course I didn't, but I never said I didn't remember.

In Tonopah I had my ace in the hole, a fellow by the name of Lee Henderson. Everybody loved him down there and he understood it. I have a fellow down there now that's the same way when I go down there, one of the Traner boys, Leonard Traner. I tried to do that all over the state. In fact, when I got down to Clark County campaigning, I would tell these boys that were taking me around, "Give me a tip. Do you think I know this fellow, or don't I know him?" Of course, the first time I didn't know him, that was a cinch. But I mean the second time, they'd say, "Yeah, this is so-and-so. He's in the insurance business. You should know him." When you walk up to a man, it makes a big, big difference. I've not noticed whether other politicians do that or not; I'm not classifying myself as a politician, but whether other candidates do it, I don't know. Molly Malone had it in mind, but instead of getting someone to go with him that knew that, he'd just walk up to them and say, "Hello, Joe." And I know that over there in Ely on a couple of occasions they'd call him on it and say, "Oh, you don't know me at all." I think that's very bad in politics, myself. Not that I'm an authority on politics, but I know that if I were to campaign again, I would do the very same thing.

I think that you would agree with me that if you go up to a man and say, "I haven't seen you..." and many cases I have, I've done it. I hadn't seen a man for several years, I'd walk up and say, "I never saw you since I saw you in Elko (or Ely or someplace) and you were in the Capital Bar (or someplace else)." To me, and I'm not fooling when I say this,



there is no substitute for the personal touch in politics. Now you can't do it anymore. I've discussed this with Paul and I've discussed it with other candidates. When you get down to Clark County, you just can't do it.

However, I am still a strong believer that if I were running for office tomorrow and I went down to Clark County, I would try to divide that county into sections. And I'd try to find a friend in each one of those sections that would have some kind of get-together. I don't mean a rally, because you just see the candidates there and very few people want to go to a rally and hear somebody blah, blah, blah, blah, and they never say anything. But to get among a group and have a little get-together, a coffee hour, or say a few cocktails, whatever it is. And if we could get in, say fifty or sixty people that you could meet, and then you could go over here and meet another fifty or sixty. So that way, you could form a nucleus that you have met about half the people. Then when you get on t.v. or something, you're not a stranger and those people point at you when you're on t.v. and say, "Oh, I met him. He's a bum," or "He's a good man," whatever it is. But I guess it's pretty difficult doing it. How many people do they have in Reno now, and how many in more than a hundred and some odd thousand in Clark County? Reno, almost a hundred thousand. So I just feel that way that there's no substitute for the personal touch in politics. The more people you can meet, the further you're going to get.

There were a number of real achievements for Nevada during the eight years I was in office.

The personnel act was a good act. I think it more or less protected a lot of the worthy people that were working for the state. However, in the purchasing act there's a little pro and con to that, I think. In fact, at first Charlie thought the same thing. I talked to

Bob Kirkwood, who is the state controller of the state of California, a very good one at that. I asked him one time if we could go down there and bid on, for instance, the gasoline for his highway department. I said, "With an out-of-state bid, do you think we could have a chance of getting it?" And he just looked at me and laughed. He says, "Are you being funny?" In other words, there's too many California outfits. And even if you were low bid, there would be some reason that you would never get that contract.

However, we ran under Charlie's administration, and I presume, the same time. with Sawyer's administration, they have let their contracts to the lowest bidder even though it hurts; goes out of the state and goes clear back to New Jersey and perhaps California. And that is one thing that I never liked about the purchasing department. I think the taxpayers should have first shot at it, although you are protecting the other taxpayers, when you stop to figure the cost of running a purchasing department. The state always bought, if we wanted to buy a machine such as your tape recorder there, we always got a discount it was from Armanko's, Carlisle's, or some other. If we ever wanted to buy a typewriter we always got a discount.

I personally feel the purchasing department helped the smaller counties more than it had the state of Nevada. When we bought big machinery for the state highway department, it was always put out on bid. When we bought the paint for stripping, it was always put out on bid. And if we had a big oiling job to do at state expense, that was always put out on bid.

I think the purchasing department has really helped a lot of the small counties when they want to buy a truck or something. They have the state advertise it and it's really helped. And while I guess it has, in one sense of the

word, given some closer touch to more people probably in bidding and so forth, I never did believe in going out of the state of Nevada. I'm just too strong a Nevadan to go out of the state to buy anything, that is, for the state. I discussed that with Charlie at the time the purchasing act came up. And he said it was just a matter of seeing how it would work out. He wasn't too sure at that time.

The personnel law, I think, was a very good act that was put through because as I say—I'll repeat it—it protected the rights of some of them, too, that weren't worth a tinker's dam. And a lot of them were hired just because they passed the examination.

You know, passing the examination a lot of times doesn't make the best employee by a long ways. I recall quite vividly when I was president of the real estate commission down there in Clark County, that I stressed to my board that, "I'm not so hot on these examinations, but I like to study the background." We found that out. People come into Las Vegas from southern California just out of school or something and study up on the real estate laws, which aren't too tough, and come into Nevada, stay for six months, and take the examination and pass with a ninety or ninety-three. And they pull about six or seven fast deals in Clark County before you catch up with them, and the next thing you know, they're gone. And when they're gone, it'll cost you too much money to ever bring them back.

I know we had one man in Clark County that wanted to take the examination and I just asked my board what they thought about it. I said, "We're five of us on here." And I said, "Personally, I would not even think of letting this man take the examination." His attorney came in and showed his bank balance of \$101,000 in the bank there in Las Vegas. But he says, "He's on parole." I said, "When you

come in here with a full pardon for this man, we'll let him take his examination."

We found different queers and so forth that I don't think that belong in the real estate business or anything else. It always has been my contention to screen them rather than make the examination so strict; to screen them and get them out of there, don't let them take the examination. An examination isn't too difficult to pass if anyone wants; the University offers that course right now. It's a night course, I believe, or something. And they offer that so anyone that wants to go to the University that's got any brain at all, can pass that examination. But I believe in the individual himself; if he's a good man and he's honest, I say fine and dandy. But if he's a shady character, I don't believe in him. I just don't believe in allowing him to take the examination. I guess we got a little bit off of the personnel act, but that ties in with the personnel problem.

The personnel department is—a lot of them take advantage of the fact that they passed the examination and, "You can't fire me." Well, we've had the same thing. I've read so many articles on the United States civil service. They stay right on the borderline. I know of a case that I brought clear up to Sherman Adams when he was in with Eisenhower. And he says, "Under this civil service act we have to have definite proof. Now can you get these complainants to make affidavits that they were never treated right." Well, I couldn't go to these people and ask for affidavits. They said, "No, we're not going to use them, but some day they might be used against us." It was the truth. When you try to remove someone from civil service, you've got a job on your hands because they can stay right on the borderline and raise a lot of havoc with you and just say, "You can't fire me," which is true, too. So even though the

personnel act was good, there is some things you can say about it that are just not too good.

The retirement went in in '51, and I worked very hard on that. At that time I was connected with the Fiscal Officers Association, and we more or less sponsored that and worked real hard. We've got a terrific guy on the head of that; that Ken Buck is guarding those dollars just like his life. Sometimes I can't agree with Ken. We're up to sixty million dollars on that thing right now. You'd think he could let go of some of it.

For instance, it's up to thirty years that you pay. And what are they doing to my friend Bert Acree out in Austin who served fifty years? The last twenty years is not even considered. I think that he should be recognized. I don't say that he should get a hundred dollars for every year or anything like that, but I think it should be recognized that he served twenty years beyond the thirty, and thirty years beyond the twenty that is required to qualify for the retirement act.

In the 1958 election, I don't think there was a question of a doubt that the third term issue of governor and the highway department were important, and that Third Street hurt us, just hurt us a lot. We discussed it, and day after day I'd go in to see Governor Russell and say, "Well, I've heard a lot of people say they want you to run for a third term, and then lots say that they don't want you to run for a third term, so that's a question you have to make up yourself. You make up your own mind." So he called me in one day and he said, "I've decided to run for a third term." Well, I naturally said, "I'm for you a hundred percent." But I knew what the third term meant. In fact, I knew that if Keith Lee ran against me, I'd have a tough, tough time and maybe be defeated. And I told Dan Franks that very same thing. So many of Keith Lee's relatives and friends were

very, very close friends of mine, but blood is thicker than water. When I got down to Clark County, I found that out. He had 122 for luncheon, all relatives. I have my brother down there, my sister-in-law and so forth, maybe a nephew and a couple of nieces, but other than that, I didn't have anyone. But I had a good organization there.

Campaigning the state, I met a lot of my friends say, "Pete, well, I'm going to vote for you but I can't vote for Russell. This third term, we don't believe in a third term." And I remember meeting Grant Sawyer and his boys in Clark County, whom I've known for years and years, that were campaigning for Grant. "Oh now, Pete, you don't tell us that we're going to elect Charlie Russell. Now just who do you think Charlie Russell is, to run for third term? He can't perpetuate himself in office." I was really shocked when Grant ran in 1966, and tried to pass over the third term statement. It was definitely a very vital issue, all over; every place we went in the state of Nevada, it was thrown up to me particularly. I don't think too many told Charlie that to his face, because most people don't. They're polite enough not to come and tell you. However, some of them will tell you they're not going to vote for you. You get that more in smaller counties. You know, people'd get angry at you and they'd say, "Well, I voted for you the last time; I'm not going to vote for you again." But you don't generally get that today. However, this time when I went out for Paul, I met a couple, particularly one lady in Fallon. I asked her if I could leave some literature, and she says, "No, as far as I'm concerned you can leave nothing." And I winked at the girls in the office because I had met them out in the hall before and had given them a couple of pens and some literature. So she got her ears knocked down, and she was defeated herself. That attitude, you can almost sense it.

I met a party that was campaigning on one 1966 trip in the southern part of the state. I think I told Mickey Laxalt, who was with us on this trip, I said, "That fellow's a Republican, Mickey, and I hate to tell you this, but he's not going to get elected." And he says, "Well, Pete, what makes you say that?" "Well, it's his approach, his manner, his attitude, his personality." You know you get those conflicting personalities, and so forth. I don't care how confident they are or anything else, they're just not going to get elected. And this happened to be one of those cases. I imagine he was confident enough, but they just couldn't put it over.

I worked with Mickey Laxalt on the recount of the 1964 election. And I don't think we touched anything, myself, in the smaller counties that would have had any effect on the election at all. I think the whole thing rested in Clark County. Now that's my honest opinion. I just can't conceive of, although it could happen, anyone voting in the Westside, which is comprised of Negroes, and getting a blank—out of 230 or 240 votes, or getting only one or two.

Having campaigned that area on two or three different occasions, I know that there's at least five or ten percent of those Negroes that are unhappy. They're discontented. I talked to too many of them that said, "Now look here, Mr. Merialdo, look what we've got. I've got four children. Look at the shoes, the soles are coming out of the shoes. They got no clothes to wear." Now those people are unhappy. They're not going to vote for the incumbent. Now this is my contention. And I just can't understand, when we were forty votes ahead, where we came up with a block of two hundred, not 194-5, 187, but two hundred, an even block of two hundred. I can't understand that. It's beyond me. Of course, I wasn't in Las Vegas and I had nothing to do

with it, but it's a question that is unanswered, and it always will be, until it's been explained how they found those two hundred from a precinct that had never been counted.

As I say, the whole thing rests right there in Clark County because in campaigning the rest of the state, we'd given him a terrific walloping in every county in the state practically, with the exception of Clark County. We had to lose by eighty-four votes and he (Cannon) carried Clark County by 13,000. So we must have walloped him by 13,716 to be exact.

Of course, you've got to get back to the time that Cannon ran against Dr. Fred Anderson. Dr. Anderson went into Clark County with ten thousand lead in the primary race. And I think he carried every county in the state with the exception of Clark and Lincoln, and yet he lost. Those are things that I never could explain.

Cannon had a terrific organization. He had his men on there that knew every angle of politics from one end to the other. He had Chet Sobsey, he had Jack Conlon, he had all the Mirabellis, and he had both newspapers, and he had other religious groups working for him. Of course, Paul made the big mistake on civil rights. He made a big mistake there; all he had to do was just keep quiet. It hurt him a lot. The Catholic school in Las Vegas voted against Paul for his stand on civil rights. Goldwater ruined him. But in this election this time it really helped him, because I've heard so many people say that we'd much rather have Goldwater now than what we've got.

What part did the Cavanaughs play in Cannon's campaign in the north? Oh, they worked very strong for him. The Cavanaugh girl is married to Thornton—Barbara Cavanaugh. And I know Johnny and Charlie and the rest of those boys really worked hard. However, all the work they did, I would say, was of no avail ordinarily. If Paul hadn't

endorsed Goldwater, he'd have beaten Cannon by two or three thousand, a minimum, if he'd kept quiet on civil rights, his majority would have been more than five thousand. It goes back to the days when, somewhat similar, of the fight between Alan Bible and Cliff Young, if Cliff Young had kept his mouth quiet about that land up in northern Washoe County and so forth, that he wanted to give to the Navy. Alan Bible later introduced a bill to that effect, but it was just the wrong time to say anything. Cliff would have whipped Bible easily, and I have told Cliff that many times. Now those are just strictly my opinions. I definitely feel that Cliff should have been in the United States Senate, and so, of course, should Paul Laxalt. But I'm rather glad that it happened the way it did, because we've now got a governor that can build up a better government, I think, for the state of Nevada.

However, it is one thing that Paul has done, well, it's done throughout the nation, is revive the Republican party, because we couldn't get much lower than we were after that Goldwater defeat. I will not support anybody that didn't support Goldwater, like Rockefeller, and Scranton and so forth, that thought they were bigger than the party. At least they could have crawled in their hole and said, "We're not taking any part." But they didn't have to denounce him. But you notice what Mr. Johnson did to Mr. Rockefeller this last time, even though Mr. Rockefeller was invited to the wedding and so forth; you notice that Mr. Johnson campaigned against Mr. Rockefeller in New York. He was quite active, and it served Governor Rockefeller right.

With Paul, I found a lot of difference in this campaign. I had campaigned the small counties for Paul against Senator Cannon, and believe it or not, I found it much easier to campaign against Senator Cannon than I did

Governor Sawyer. Of course, putting two and two together, I realized what I was up against, because other than a few appointments that Howard Cannon made to West Point or Annapolis, you never heard much of Senator Cannon. One or two ladies or fellows said, "Oh, Senator Cannon nominated my son for West Point," but that was very, very seldom that you ran across that in the smaller counties. Most of the time they get them out of Reno or Las Vegas anyway.

But with Grant Sawyer, some very good friends of mine would say, "Pete, I'm sorry I can't help you out. Do you realize my niece is working for Grant," and "Do you realize that I'm on this board," "Do you realize that my cousin is down in Carson," and so forth and so on. He had his connections in every county in the state, and I have to say right here and now, that Grant Sawyer is one of the greatest, and probably the most ruthless politician that they ever had in the state of Nevada, that is, particularly in the governor's chair. Had Charlie Russell been the politician that Grant Sawyer is, he would maybe not have been beaten for the third term—I don't know. But Grant made his mistakes, and, of course, with the third term too, he was defeated.

But Sawyer was defeated also because, as I told some of my friends, "I'm out campaigning for Paul and it isn't a difficult job." A man campaigning is just like a salesman. If you're a salesman and you've got a good product to sell, it isn't too difficult, and I figure that I had a good product in Paul Laxalt. The girls (Ladies for Laxalt) were wonderful. They did a nice job. They were sweet and kind and so forth, and if they ran against someone who was a little opposed, they took it on the chin and moved to the next place. We made practically every town in the state of Nevada with the exception of Caliente and Pioche and the southern part of the state—you know



those small towns, like Overton, Mesquite. We didn't make any of Clark County, and we made no places in Washoe County. Ours were always the small counties. We didn't work Ormsby either, because that was taken care of. Our job was to see that Paul got an even break in those difficult counties like White Pine and Mineral, and Nye, and Lander, and Elko, which are all predominantly Democratic counties. I might say that out of the small counties, we came up with probably a thousand, fifteen hundred to the good. In case it were a tie between Washoe and Clark, we would have sneaked in a few hundred from the small counties.

I often talked to my friends out in Yerington and out in Hawthorne. Jack McCloskey and Walter Cox and I had been friends for many, many years. They would call Las Vegas and the reports that they would get was that Paul was going to get beat by eighty-five hundred votes down there. And I says, "Well, fellows, I can't go for that. I just can't. I might concede five thousand, but I'll never go for eighty-five hundred. And I think you fellows are talking to the same man all the time. Aren't you talking to Bryn Armstrong?" And they said, "Yeah, we're talking to Bryn Armstrong and Bryn is giving us those figures." "Well," I said, "You've talked to some. I've talked to my brother and several others, and I know that in the inner circles of Paul's groups, they wouldn't concede over a thousand to Grant Sawyer." And, of course, I was skeptical, because losing by a thousand votes in a county like Clark that Paul had lost the time before by thirteen thousand, it was just almost inconceivable. You just couldn't realize that he was going to hold Sawyer within that.

I called Paul's house on election day to talk to Jackie (the girls had sent me a dozen American Beauty roses, for their "nana" as they called me), and Jackie said, "Paul's just

coming in the house, maybe you'd like to talk to him." So he told me, he says, "Pete you can bet the family jewels and you can bet everything." He says, "We're not going to lose Clark County by over a thousand votes." I said, "That's good enough for me, Paul." And I called my brother and I called my friends and tried to get up a bet or two myself. I think that Joe Mackey out in Winnemucca lost about \$13,000 on that. That is the reports that I've gotten. I made a couple of bets, but not for myself. I wanted to bet \$500 on the last day, but I couldn't get it down.

In traveling through the state of Nevada, it's surprising the number of people that you meet that you think well, I had campaigned that as the third term, and now it was the fourth or fifth. I had campaigned three times for myself, once for Paul before. There's still a lot of the old timers that remember you, that say, "Well, we couldn't help you last time," "We'll do what we can for you this time." I made it a point to see my friends that I thought had a little political weight, too, to get out. I knew they were for Paul, but the thing is, to just to say, "I'm for Paul," and then just vote, isn't enough. There's you, and your wife, that's two votes. That's a different thing than just getting out and meeting people. Well, here's a group of people from Utah or California, some of the states, that have only been in Nevada for a year. Call on those people and say now, "Here, this is my friend and he's a good man. We'd like to have you support him." I know when we got to Mina, I think it was, we met some lady and she said, "It won't do you any good to talk to me because I've already voted and I'm a staunch Democrat. I voted absent voter in the state of Washington." And I says, "Well, we're going down here to this club." "Well, it won't do you any good to go down there, because Mrs. so-and-so is a very staunch Democrat." And

I said, "What did you say her name was?" So she told me. So I walked down there. I think Laxalt was with me. So I walked in the door and she said, "Pete Merialdo, where have you been?" And before we left there, we talked to her and she took a lot of Paul's literature and his pens and she says, "You rest assured that we will really get out and do some work for him because we believe in him and we should have a change. We're just not in favor of this administration and you know that I'm a strong Democrat." She probably had even been on the Democratic central committee, which I found in a lot of little towns.

For instance, in Austin, Bert Acree, who was a member of that central committee, had his picture taken with Paul. And, of course, it was through my efforts, because I had known Bert since 1914, which is a little over fifty years. We discussed this matter. In fact, I have a letter at the present time that Bert wrote to Paul and said, "Pete and I discussed it, and Pete said you are a fine fellow and that you could win." And how right he was. So it was just fellows like that in the smaller counties that saved Paul from getting the drubbing in the smaller counties.

We lost Lander County, but we lost it because we didn't spend the right, that is, enough time in Battle Mountain. There was a hundred and fifty or a couple of hundred miners up there that were voting in there, and I didn't have time to stop, and Paul had never seen them, and no one else had ever contacted them. And they all registered Democratic. I know that had we been able to spend a half a day with them and talked to a few we wouldn't have lost Lander County.

We lost Elko County for the same reason. I told Paul when I came back, I said, "We're going to get a terrific drubbing in Carlin." Paul says, "I guess I realize that, but I don't think there's anything we can do." "Well," I

said, "I had some good workers up there, some dandy workers, but there's not enough of them. And it's four to one Democratic." And, of course, it's an old railroad town and they just will not change. But I had fellows writing letters and I stopped to see three or four of my friends, but they told me, they said, "It's an uphill battle." So we lost Carlin by 166 votes. We lost Elko County—approximately three or four hundred votes. So I know that if we could have held them even in Carlin... Now Wells, we worked a little bit harder there, but, of course, there's not the votes in Wells that there is in Carlin. We did pretty well. We only lost Wells by a handful of thirty, forty votes. And I think we did exceptionally well in Elko, being Grant Sawyer's—well, he claimed it as his home town. He was district attorney there for a long time and he had a lot of friends. He was the "Man of the Year" up there one time.

As I talked to a lot of my close friends, they didn't think Grant was too impressive as a district attorney. However, those county commissioners up there would tell me if they ever wanted to take a trip to Boise, Idaho, or Salt Lake City, and sell Elko County for the Chamber of Commerce, they always took Grant Sawyer with them because he was a marvelous talker and he could put over his ideas in good shape. I personally don't feel that he was much interested in the law. I think he would have made a tremendous public relations man. Of course, he tried to carry that on. He went clear over to Europe to sell the state of Nevada, which I thought was asinine. It was just a good junket for a lot of businessmen, and the governor, and a few of the rest. Well, it seems strange to try to go over to Europe to sell the state of Nevada. And he was forever going to New York and Chicago and all over the United States. But I think you can do that through your public relations work a lot better than you can with



your governor. I don't think that helped Grant Sawyer too much. This being away from office so often, he was very seldom at home. I think we'll find out that Paul will stay.

But those things in running through the state were all piled up a little and the difference of the people that have different peeves. Actually, Paul's going to get them, too. For instance, "My son tried to get a job on the highway department, and so-and-so didn't do a thing for him." I'm glad that they have John Bawden in there as state highway engineer, because I think John will do a pretty good job. And I think McGowan will do a good job because I've talked to him about this situation.

I don't think it's going to be any more of a one-man rule in the highway department. I have a lot of friends over in that highway department that used to stop in and talk to me and give me a few pointers of who to see in different counties. They're working over there right now. They definitely were very unhappy and I know a lot of them would have quit if it hadn't been for that retirement. They've got one, fifteen years, and they're just not going to throw that retirement out the window. In fact, that's the only thing that's saving the highway department, because the highway department in the state of California, I believe, they pay a lot better wages for engineers.

There has been inaugurated, should I say, an encouragement in the University of Nevada for these boys to go through and then work in the summertime for the highway department, an educational program, in other words. I know my partner, Buck Jones's, boy works, and works every summer, and then when his four years term is up, he's not duty-bound, but he will feel obligated to go with the state of Nevada. And he will probably go in as an engineer instead of a stickman, or whatever they call them, out in those different places.

But I will say this about Paul Laxalt, I think he had one of the finest organizations in 1966. It was well-oiled. Everybody knew what they were supposed to do. There was no duplicating or anything else. Everybody knew what they were supposed to do. We didn't flub on it. We didn't have the time, that's all as I say, to spend in places. Now mind you, this is no alibi, but we probably would have carried Carlin if we spent ten days or two weeks there. We would have beaten that much, and the same way with Battle Mountain.

The people in the little towns never let us down. Rene Lemaire (in Battle Mountain), is getting up in years, and he didn't get up to those mining places as he wasn't a registrar. He never contacted these people. In these smaller counties, having been from a small county I think I know a little about campaigning. If you can spend three or four days, it helps.

I remember when my nephew, Pat Mann, ran against Judge Sexton. And he talked about it to me before he ran. I said, "Pat, let me tell you something. If you've got a thousand dollars and you can take thirty days away from your law office, you have a good chance of winning." He says, "Pete, I don't have the thousand dollars and I can't spare any thirty days." I said, "Then I'm sorry to tell you Pat, you can't win, because when you run against a man like Sexton living in Battle Mountain, you've got to get in there and knock over his apple wagon." In other words, my contention has always been, where if you go into a precinct and there's ten votes and they're all against you, if you could just get three of those ten and he gets seven, you're only beaten by four votes. And it has always been my contention to get all the votes you can, but try to take as many from him. Break his playhouse down. I did it when I ran against Donovan in Tonopah, I did it in Wells, and I did it in Ely. And I don't know, I think I did it in a few places in Clark

County. You just can't let the other fellow get ahead. Of course, the other fellow if he's a smart politician—I'm not trying to tell you I'm a smart politician—if he's on the ball, he's going to try to do the same thing, isn't he?

Paul did a tremendous job this time of organizing and having his boys together. I think I know myself personally. I never let anybody I talked to get away. I was talking insurance to somebody in Reno, "I'll be in to see you. I want to give you one of Paul Laxalt's pens." And I did that from early last summer. If you're going to win, you're going to have to get in and dig and live and breathe this politics from the day you start out. You just have to go right in and never quit.

I don't think that reapportionment played too much a part in the governor's race. Rene Lemaire wasn't bitter. I know he wasn't mad at Paul, because I called on Rene when I was in Battle Mountain. You see, I went to Battle Mountain twice, once with the girls and once before, because I had a suspicion that it was, you know, a little bit rough. I just never spent enough time there. Well, I didn't want to go up to the mine. It was rough weather and I just didn't want to go up there. I talked to Rene, and I think probably Rene took a lot for granted, because you got a lot of Laxalt talk in the town and we had a lot of very prominent people, good Democrats all. But you can't let that sway you too far. In other words, you've got to get right down to the grass roots and keep contacting all of them because, and particularly against an incumbent, you just have to remember an incumbent has always got the edge.

I found that out in the thirty years I was in Eureka. Every year I built up a few more friends. Why not? Isn't it just as easy to be friendly with a person? They say, "Oh, you're a politician." Whether I'm playing politician or not, I'd just as soon smile at a person, much

rather than try to swear at him, or scowl. I think it's just as easy to be nice as it is to be grumpy or grouchy or something like that. I don't know. What is the difference, can you tell me?

So every year that I was in office I just gained a few more friends. I think that happens with any fiscal officer. If you look at the study of politics in the state of Nevada and you go back over the years, you'll find out that, goodness gracious, the fiscal officers can stay there. Fred Oldfield stayed in there for forty-five years over in Ely as county clerk. Bert Acree, fifty years. I was in for thirty years. Bill Weathers and others in Elko. Recorder, and auditor, and clerk, and treasurer have no reason to do anything but make friends. They don't have any controversies or anything else. They just come in and you bring a document to record and say, "I'd be happy to do it for you. This is the fee. The fee is statutory." You just can't say I'm lining my pockets. And the same way with the auditing. The schoolteacher will send in a voucher. You make it a point to get it out in time. And you just build up. I know that that's how I won. I had been a deputy for three years, and just because I had served them, they were my friends. And I think any county or state officer would do the same thing. Of course, it's getting a little different in the state of Nevada now because we're getting a little bit larger.

At the time that I was defeated in 1958, I met Governor Sawyer in the lobby of the capitol, in the hallway there, and he said, "Why don't you come up and see me?" He says, "Governor Russell is going to give me an office upstairs." I said, "Okay Grant." "Yes," Bette said, "Pete, do that." So I did.

Grant says, "Well, I'm sorry in a way, Pete, that you were defeated, but you understand how it was." I said, "Oh, definitely, Grant." I said, "You didn't vote for me and I didn't vote

for you. I was obligated to Governor Russell and I was on his team.” And he says, “That’s right.” But he says, “You’re too valuable a man, with all your years of experience in the county and the state, to let go,” and, he says, “I want to tell you, we’re going to have to use you. However, you won’t be getting the same salary that you got as state controller, but we were going to use you.” And I said, “Well, thank you very much, Grant.” I said, “I appreciate it.”

I thought then that perhaps I would go back into some state government of some kind. And I can’t realize that I was fifty-eight years old at the time, or fifty-nine, and how stupid I could have been to think that he was sincere about this. I waited all the rest—(this was right after the election)—of November, all of December, and all of January. So I just said to myself, “You’re stupid.”

Emery Graunke came along one day. He, at one time, was the state chairman of the Republican party. We had become very, very good friends. And he says, “Well, why don’t you go to work for me?” He says, “You fit right down my alley.” He says, “I need a real estate man. You’ve had experience in that. And I need an insurance man. You’ve sold insurance.” And he says, “I need an accountant,” and, he says, “You’re a licensed public accountant.” And I said, “Well, that’s perfectly all right, but I won’t go to work for you Emery.” I said, “I’ll buy in with you; for too many years I’ve been my own boss.” And I says, “Right now I don’t feel like going to work for anyone.” “Well,” he says, “Fine and dandy.” So I gave him \$15,000, and drew up an agreement, with M. A. Tiny Fairchild one of the partners, and Emery Graunke. So we operated then from February of ’59 until ’64. Then we bought Emery out. Wilford D. Jones came into the company. In the meantime, Bill Arant came along and he was anxious to get

into the insurance business and I told him I’d sell it. “What are you going to do?” I said, “I don’t know. Probably going to go to work for Paul, and if Paul gets elected, he’ll probably give me something. If he doesn’t, it’s still all right with me.” I says, “I’ll have my retirement. My social security has been built up.” I said, “I’m not worried about it.”

So I told Paul at the time that I went to work for him, I said, “I’m interested in anything. If you want to give me a job, that’s perfectly all right.” But I said, “If I didn’t believe in you, I wouldn’t be out campaigning for you.” “Well,” he said, “you gotta go out and take this trip with the girls in the smaller counties, ‘Ladies for Laxalt.’” “Gee, I don’t know what my wife will think about that.” (Of course, she’s not going to worry too much.)

So he said, “If you will take the first heat- -you and Mickey can go on that first heat- -with the girls and Marie’s husband.” “Then,” he says, “the second heat, Pete Kelley will take.” I said, “Okay, because I don’t like to leave my wife alone too long. This first trip is only three days.”

So I had my suspicions when I came back. Mickey had a talk with Paul and he said, “Now Pete, we’ve got to have you make this second trip.” I said, “Mickey, I thought that I went out this first trip, I thought Pete Kelley...” “Well,” he says, he might meet us, but we’ve got to depend on you. We’ve got to have you along on this next trip.” “Well,” I said, “If that’s the case, I’ve got to get my wife up to Eureka, because I don’t want her staying here all alone.” He says, “Well, you arrange that.” So I had my wife fly up this Friday morning. We took her into Reno and she flew into Ely and my son-in-law met her over there. And then I took off for another four- or five-day trip. Then we picked my wife up in Eureka coming back. She was with us in Eureka, Austin, Fallon, and then we went into

Fernley—we stopped in Fernley twice—and then into Reno.

I think I could have remained here, but I'm getting kind of tired of real estate. And I've been doing accounting since 1930; I was getting tired of that. And I thought well, I'll probably retire. I talked to my doctor in Woodland and he said, "Whatever you do Pete," he says, "I don't want you to retire." I says, "Well, I'm sixty-seven years old, don't you think..." "Oh no, no, no," he says, "you've been active all your life." And he says, "No good if you retire right now."

So after election, Paul called me election day and he says, "Boy, I'll never forget you." So fine and dandy. Then he called me one day and he said, "What are you interested in?" I told him I didn't want to be the chief any more; I wouldn't mind being one of the Indians. "Well," he says, "the employment security is open," he said, "and Spitz's job, head of the motor vehicle." I said, "No, I'm not interested in that, but I wouldn't mind taking an assistant in that motor vehicle. You're more or less your own boss." He says, "Yeah, knowing you." So I saw him yesterday, and he said, "We're working this out." So that will be my plans for the next four years, anyway. After that I'll be seventy-one. I don't know if they'll want me to stay around or not. I'll probably be walking around on a crutch. I see individuals that are pretty old in state government, though.



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CONCLUSION

My philosophy of life is—I guess it always has been, I’ve always done it, and I continue to do it—I like to assist people if I can. That’s strange, but when I was in Eureka and they can all tell you up there, I think, that if anyone ever had any problem, whether it was with the department of immigration, or the naturalization, or anything else that they came in to me; and all the Basque people, I did all of their work. I enjoyed that so much. Many times I got paid for it. Many times I didn’t. But I’ve been paid a thousandfold for it, in other ways. Lord, to go down the street and meet someone, “Hi Pete, how ya doin’? Come in, I want to buy you a drink.” That’s been my philosophy in life, really is, to try to help.

Now I’m all wrapped up in my grandchildren. I have one boy, Bernard DePaoli, that’s at Santa Clara, that’s won a scholarship down there. Although he only has a B-average, he’s passed all right this first semester, but he has made his B-average to retain that scholarship. Then I have a granddaughter, Stephanie Damele, going to the University of California, and she’s

majoring in psychology. And, of course, we did our darnedest to try to get her to go to school in Nevada, but her mother graduated from Cal for the simple reason that someone talked her into it, telling her that the University of California had a very high standing in the nation as a school of chemistry, which it did have, and my daughter, Bobby, graduated there. Then naturally her daughter said, “Well, I’m going to graduate from Cal, too.” And she’s taking psychology and we got her reports and (I don’t know whether this should go on the record, but I’m really proud of her), when her reports came in—she’s taking four majors—she got four A’s. I think that’s fantastic for a little girl to come out of Eureka, a school with about thirty-five or forty students, to go into California. Of course, she did have a six weeks course at University of California at Santa Barbara, last summer.

So right now I just want to grow old, I guess, with my wife and my grandchildren. I enjoy them every chance I get to be with them and hear the—well we’re entirely different generations as you know— to hear their



thoughts and to hear my granddaughter talk about the University of California. She doesn't believe in anything like this fellow that's down there that's raising all that fuss. She doesn't believe in that, but she does believe in the expression of thoughts from the students and the University.

Of course, my belief is, if you don't like the University, you don't have to go to it. Just as Ronald Reagan told them. The students can have their associated students, but it's the taxpayers and the endowments, of course, that provide the University to those students. And if they just don't like it, they can move someplace else. My granddaughter says, "Well Grandpa, I think you're just about right."

So right now that's just mostly what I'm interested in, my grandchildren. And also interested in doing a good job for Paul, whatever he put me into. If I don't, I'll quit. If I can't do a good job where I am, I don't want to stay there.

I'm not a bit ashamed. I'm not bragging or boasting or anything, but I'm not a bit ashamed of the work that I did all the years I was in Eureka, when I was state controller, the job that I've done here. I still have some odd accounts—income tax, that I have to square away and give to somebody else. I'm not a bit ashamed of any of that. If I can't do a good job, I don't want to do it.

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